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Thomas L. Marshall.

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THE

SILENT PASTOR;

OR

Consolations for the Sick.

BY

THOMAS SADLER, PH.D.

"The greatest of afflictions is an affliction lost."

A NEW EDITION,
MUCH ENLARGED.

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CERTAIN it is, that as nothing can better do it, so there is nothing greater, for which God made our tongues, next to reciting His praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have, than that we should bring joy to our brother, who with his dreary eyes looks to Heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids close together — than that thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease?—JER. TAYLOR.

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PREFACE.

THE repeated testimonies, which I have received, of the usefulness of the first edition of "The Silent Pastor" (for the most part the production of a few days of indisposition), render it imperative in me both to publish a new edition, and to bestow upon it more time and maturer thought. I have accordingly re-written "The Christian View of Sickness," and added so much matter, partly original and partly selected, that the work is at least double its former size. The Extracts are entirely new, more than three-fourths of the Prayers, nearly all the Meditations, and above half of the Hymns. I have restricted myself in the amount of original matter, because it seemed to me that I should better meet the wants of those, whom I have particularly in view, by drawing copiously and in a catholic spirit from the richest existing sources of religious strength and consolation. I have said what it is in my heart to say to my afflicted brother,

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but surely I may far more effectually aid him, by enabling him to have as his guides and companions (so to speak) in the vale of sorrow and suffering the holiest and most spiritual-minded men who have ever lived. Indeed some of the selections, being scattered portions of works of considerable length, have occupied much more of my time, than would have been required to compose the same number of pages. I may particularly refer to the "Thoughts from Jeremy Taylor," and the Prayer from Pascal in page 86.

In the Table of Contents will be found attached to the hymns and the selected extracts and meditations the names of their authors: but with regard to the prayers, as those, which are not my own, may, in some cases, be thought to differ materially from their originals, I shall simply state that I am principally indebted for them to Jeremy Taylor, Pascal, Thomas à Kempis, Archbishop Leighton, Dr. Arnold, Hartley, Bishop Patrick and Greenwood's Liturgy.

T. S.

Hampstead.

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THE

CHRISTIAN VIEW OF SICKNESS.

Sickness visits us all more or less in our season, and is one of the greatest sources of human suffering. The sunk eye, the wan cheek, the trembling limbs, are only the outward effects of the pain, the languor, and the restlessness, with which we are struggling within. The food once so agreeable and strengthening, is now nauseous and burdensome, though we so much need nourishment. The atmosphere, once so soft and refreshing, now brings with it chills, fever, and cough, though our bodily frames are sinking from the want of its exhilarating embrace. Long nights of sweet balmy sleep are no longer ours, though in body and in spirit we are so weary. The world rolls on as usual,—the sun rising and setting—our fellow men going forth to their labours and pleasures,—but we helplessly linger on our couch, in vain

alike the gentle voice of evening endeavouring to lull us to repose, and the animating voice of morning calling us forth to action. The anxious countenances of those around us betray their eager watching for some favourable indication. In short, all the circumstances of sickness confirm our own feelings, that we are out of harmony with present scenes. It may be only for a period; but it may be that we are approaching our time of earthly silence, and shall soon sleep with our fathers.

I have thought, therefore, that I cannot better fulfil the office of a Christian Pastor than by attempting to lift up the mind and affections above the objects of sense and time, and awaken the soul to the heavenly strains, in which it may soon join, *by setting forth the Christian view of sickness.*

And first, I would lead my sick friend to Christ himself, in whom we have the most perfect exemplification of the Christian's triumph over suffering and death. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Now, what was it that so wonderfully sustained him? At the betrayal, he said to Peter, who would have defended him with the sword, "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" In conversation with his disciples, he tells them that

they ought to *rejoice*, that he is about to leave the world, when his home henceforth will be *with the Father*. In his own secret communings, his words are, "Now is my spirit troubled: what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause *came* I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." In the garden of Gethsemane he fell down on his knees, and, after his deepest inward struggles, cried, "Father, Thy will, not mine, be done." And, just before he breathed his last on the Cross, he exclaimed, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit." Thus, in Christ's own case, everything seems to be comprehended in the one endearing word, *Father*. He ascended at once to the holiest and grandest of all relations, that between himself and the Infinite Spirit; and he could desire no more; my Father—my allwise, almighty, and all-loving Father, appointed my lot, therefore all is well. Nor is this inexhaustible fountain of consolation confined to Christ. The main purpose of his mission was to reveal the Father to us: he taught us to pray to "our Father." And we further learn in almost every page of the sacred Scriptures, that difficulties and suffering, as well as health and ease, are a part of the Divine economy for our highest well-being and happiness, just as

showers and sunshine are both necessary to the fertility of the earth, that God sends us losses, disappointments and diseases—not because He derives pleasure from our woes, or is indifferent to our tears, but to make us wiser, better and stronger, more like Jesus Christ, and more fit for everlasting life! "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring from the ground." "Blessed is the man, whom Thou chastenest, O Lord." "Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." And how rich is the New Testament in such declarations as this of St. Paul, "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." Here, therefore, have we the broad groundwork of Christian consolation, in the teachings of God's chosen prophets and apostles of old, and especially in the example of Jesus Christ! and turning therewith, as we now shall, to the experiences of life, I believe we shall see and feel that God has been as much with us in our troubles as in our success, and that His angel of sorrow not less than His angel of gladness is sent to bless us.

It is *something* that sickness alone enables us to

appreciate health. When the bodily functions proceed harmoniously and uninterruptedly for a long time, we are very apt altogether to forget that our existence and powers are a precious gift from above. The saying, that we know not what health is till we have lost it, has not become so common without a reason. We speak of our having a heart as a fact in anatomy, but we are ignorant of the difference between tumultuous throbbings, and a gentle and equal, yet vigorous circulation. We are aware that we possess a stomach; but being never troubled with weight, and pain, and nausea, we think not of its mysterious workings and indispensable uses; and so we fall insensibly into a habit of eating, drinking, breathing, of lying down and rising up, as if in our physical constitution and the outward universe, we had nothing to be grateful for. How different, however, is it with us in sickness, and when we are just recovering! I can easily imagine, that in going over again in our memories former periods of health, we have often more real enjoyment of it on our sick bed, than when we had it in actual possession.' And when we lay aside our ailments and weakness, what new beings are we! Going forth from our dreary chamber, we seem to be entering a world grown brighter

and happier since we last left it; an unusual relish attends our appetite; our slumbers are so hushed and tranquil, that we could fancy an angel watching over us; and the first day of going forth amongst the beauties of nature,—never shall I forget the thrill and the glow that have pervaded my whole being at such a time,—the glad warm sun genially shining as if in welcome, —every breath of air (for I seemed to taste it) full alike of sweetness and refreshment—unnumbered cheerful voices greeting me from hill and dale and wood—the animating sound of human activity harmonizing on every side,—at such a season, verily, we learn a lesson of health, which it is almost impossible for us to forget, and if we are susceptible to religious impressions at all, a thought of our Creator mingles with and hallows our joy,—a flame of devotion is kindled within us, and there arises from the altar of our hearts true incense of prayer and praise!

But from the world without, we hasten to the world within, and to our chief inquiry, viz., *the effect of sickness on our spirits and characters.* One very important service we must allow that it renders, at the outset, in *correcting the serious delusions into which we are so liable to fall as to the nature and object of our earthly pilgrimage.* To

all appearances, the majority of us live as if we were never to die, or, at least, never to rise again; and who is there who does not often find himself centreing here his chief interests and affections? Now sickness teaches us that this is only a land of sojourn; so, indeed, we fancied we knew and felt before; so preachers and books taught us, and we abundantly acknowledged it in words: but sickness teaches us in a quite different, a far more searching and effectual way. It lays its hand upon the man, who is engrossed in accumulating wealth and building new storehouses, and who has listened to thousands of sermons, and whispers with a strange, irresistible power, Remember that *soon*, it may be this night—this night—thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? In like manner, it reminds the Mammon-worshipper, amidst his property and those securities, about which he has taken such infinite pains, that the security of his very being is wanting, that in a few years he, too, will have to follow to that bourn, where his golden calf can no longer afford him help. And to all those of us, who place not our only reliance on the rock of ages, whose most cherished wealth is not the inward treasure of a pure, noble, and loving soul, and whose first

desire and greatest ambition are not to do God's will and finish His work, it is the very warning that we want, not only making known, but so making known as to bring home to us the fleeting and uncertain tenure, on which we hold both earth and life, and that for realities and stability we must look elsewhere. If impressing upon us thus strongly our mortality were simply awakening us from a pleasant dream, we might perhaps rather sleep on; but it is surely well for us to know the truth, when it has a *most important practical bearing,* as it assuredly has, when it prevents our over-estimating temporal, and rouses our sensibility to abiding interests. Of essential value, therefore, is sickness to us, in making things, which we are wont to regard in a false light, appear to us what they really are, thereby preparing the way for a second most desirable and blessed state,

A state of panting after God, of susceptibility to spiritual influences, a state in which we first yearn towards, and then realize things unseen and eternal. When earth is receding from us, and our strong right arm has given way, and we reckon no long years to come, and the daughters of music are brought low, and the grasshopper is a burden, and desire fails, so far are we from being in dark-

ness and alone, that gazing steadfastly upwards, *then* most of all do we begin to discern clearly the perfected earth for which we are destined, and the almighty arm stretched forth out of the clouds, and to hear the angel, standing on the land and on the sea, proclaiming that time shall be no longer. We cannot call ourselves helpless if we believe in Christ, when he so tenderly invites the weary and heavy laden to him, that he may give them rest. And now do we *understand* these words. It is true our former objects of reliance have crumbled away, but they leave the road open to the Divine throne. We thought we had something of our own,—it was a shadow, and for a little while we thought we had nothing, —but at length we find that we have God and Christ and our own souls. Houses, titles, rank, on which we had set so much store, have silently vanished out of our cares; and now upon the ruins of all that we had before deemed great and solid and enduring, rise up before us in their true loveliness and grandeur the unfading verities of Heaven. How true, as well as beautiful, is the representation of faith as a "night flower!" "My mind (said one, whose earthly existence was fast drawing to a close), my mind is crowded with thoughts,—precious thoughts of death and

immortality." There is profound meaning in the two lines by Waller:

"The soul's dark cottage battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time has made."

And Pope calls sickness "a sort of early old age, teaching us a diffidence in our earthly state, and inspiring us with the thoughts of a future, better than a thousand volumes of philosophers and divines." Accordingly, were I asked to point out one in whom the fire of devotion burns most brightly, I should answer—In the bosom of yonder invalid, who praises God more for the fraction of health he is permitted to retain, than the robust man who cannot tell you what illness is. Is not, then, sickness indeed a benefit to us, if it thus draw away our thoughts and affections from the fading and transitory of earth, and lift them to things above? If the pale thin face be most frequently turned towards the skies — if the trembling hands be most fervently lifted up —if the weak voice be most tuned to prayer— are the visitations of disease lost upon us?

"Thou art like night, O sickness! deeply stilling
Within my heart the world's disturbing sound,
And the dim quiet of my chamber filling
With low, sweet voices, by life's tumult drown'd.

Thou art like awful night!—thou gatherest round
The things that are unseen, tho' close they lie—
And with a truth, clear, startling and profound,
Giv'st their dread presence to our mental eye.
Thou art like starry, spiritual night!
High and immortal thoughts attend thy way,
And revelations, which the common light
Brings not, though wakening with its rosy ray
All outward life.—Be welcome, then, thy rod,
Before whose touch my soul unfolds itself to God!"*

Further, when the spirit feels its coming independence and its kindred with saints and God, and its views and prospects are thus infinitely enlarged,—there follow *an earnest awakening of conscience, a deep spiritual thoughtfulness on practical duties, and a most sanctifying and elevating influence upon our whole characters.* Seeing that the material universe will be dissolved, we are struck with the immense importance of the question, what manner of men ought we to be? A searching retrospect is made of our past lives; all adventitious circumstances being removed, everything is judged by the unfailing standards of truth and goodness: then falls the silent tear of penitence, and the one object which henceforth appears worth living for, is to become like Christ, fit for the divine presence and the abodes of the

* Mrs. Hemans.

blessed.* Unclothing ourselves of our earthly habiliments, we seriously bethink ourselves of the white angel robes, in which only we can ascend to the spirits of the just. O the angels are rightly pictured as coming out of the clouds. Even Jesus Christ himself was perfected by suffering. Ought we not, then, to be reconciled to an appointment, wherein we can trace so manifest a tendency to build us up to the full stature of the perfect man?

Not only, however, are the great principles, which I have endeavoured to set forth, in themselves reasonable and in accordance with lofty views of our spiritual nature, we have also *numberless living witnesses to them in many of the wisest and best men of various nations and ages.* "I had lately (writes a distinguished heathen) an opportunity of seeing, in my attendance on a friend in a languishing state, how much better we all are for sickness: avarice and vice then lose their hold upon us; we are no more slaves to our irregular passions; the honours of the

* "Sickness is one of God's kindest messengers, to put us in mind of our folly, and incogitance, and excess, in health: and how discomposed and disconsolate soever it renders our thoughts, it awakens those that have long slept, and presents many things to our clearest view, which we had laid aside, never to be thought of more."—*Clarendon.*

world are no allurement to us; its wealth we slight, finding that, be our pittance ever so small, it will serve us to our journey's end. At such seasons, we think of God, and remember that we ourselves are mortal: we neither envy, nor despise others, nor take a malignant pleasure in hearing their faults exposed." A Christian, who was at the same time one of our greatest philosophers, in reviewing his pilgrimage, as he approached the vale of years, declared, "I even think it an *advantage* to me, and am truly thankful for it, that my health received the check that it did, when I was young; since a muscular habit, from high health and strong spirits, is not, I think, in general, accompanied with *that sensibility of mind*, which is favourable to piety." When Channing was told of the death by cancer of one, who, though naturally stern, grew gentler, more thoughtful, prayerful, bright and loving each day—"Ah," (said he) "this shows us a little of the *meaning* of suffering and sorrow. How grand is the power of the spirit!"*

* There has been of late, in some quarters, a cry for bodily healthiness and success as the only condition in which the spirit can perfectly thrive; but never was there any hypothesis with less foundation in all we know of Divine Providence, in the experience of all past ages, and in the whole genius of Christianity. A healthy spirit is what

And do you not remember the emphatic and solemnly impressive manner, in which, as if a new light had just burst in upon him, Arnold, a few hours before he closed his eyes, never to re-open them, bade his son "thank God for pain?" I might enumerate to almost any extent, instances of a similar kind; I might refer to Cowper, to whose mental and bodily sufferings we are partly,

we want, and the condition in which God has placed us is undoubtedly one in which bodily suffering and decay form a part. The question, however, is not whether health of body promotes health of spirit, for undoubtedly it does; but whether uninterrupted health would be better for us than health with a liability to disease to show us what health is, and that our bodies and our spirits are not one. We sometimes gain health of spirit by losing health of body. The spirit is clothed with immortality, when the body falls into ruins. Instead of the teachings of health being at all times (as has been urged) "more large, sound, varied, and rich than those of sickness," they are surely to us, in our imperfect state, often not nearly so large, for they are more confined to this world,—not nearly so sound, for, that the body is a frail tenement of clay, and that there is a spirit-land, are amongst the soundest of all truths,—not nearly so varied, any more than our conception of the material universe would be, if we had lived only during hours of sunshine, and never beheld the rising of the moon and stars,—and not nearly so rich, for, with the majority of us, it is only when we are driven from finite things that we realize at all the infinite treasures at the right hand of God.

at least, indebted for his poetry; to Lardner, from whom, in all probability, we should never have had, were it not for his deafness, that inestimable work, the influence of which is felt much wider than its name is known, "The Credibility of the Gospel History;" to Jean Paul, who sometimes had not enough bread, and who yet, in looking back upon his life, "would not that he had been born richer;" and to Dr. Kitto, who is, in this our day, pouring forth such treasures of general and theological information, and who was transformed from a common bricklayer into a literary man, by an accident, which cost him his sense of hearing! But need I go further than your own history, and that of your kindred and friends, for examples—many beautiful examples—of the thoughtless being turned to reflection, and the impious to prayer, of the hard-hearted being melted to tenderness,—of those, in whom a rapid disease has been outstripped by the spirit's ascent heavenwards, by its progress in love and tenderness and great principles,—whom it has been one of your greatest privileges as well as your duty to watch and nurse,—who have made the pathway to the grave so familiar to you, and so rich in sweetest and holiest associations, that you can never fear it any more? And who could ever maintain that

such results are dearly purchased by any deprivations we can experience during our threescore years and ten? Verily, if we were to blot calamity (as we call it) out of the past, not only must we blot out with it the world's greatest ages and most heroic men, but our friends with whom we daily walk, our brothers and sisters, parents and children, husband or wife, would be less exalted beings,—our homes would be less sacred, and I will add, less happy, and we ourselves should be in a great measure without the little spiritual stature, that we have. So true is it that every human heart is a pool of Bethesda, frequented by a hundred infirmities, which the angel of sorrow only can heal.

I have mentioned *particularly* faith in God and desire for personal holiness, as fruits of sickness; I must not omit to add to them, *blessed manifestations of kindness, such as we seldom meet with in seasons of health and outward success.* Our last solemn parting is drawing near, it is natural that the depths of our affections should be sounded; soon will none here below be able any longer to minister to our wants, it is natural that those who are sincerely attached to us should eagerly embrace the brief remaining opportunity: we have, therefore, especially, familiar voices in our chamber,

the old loved faces about our bed. But, much as on such occasions we naturally expect, we almost invariably find, in the end, that much more has been ours; and how many have made the confession, that never before did they know what love was; so that with most sweet comfort are combined an extended knowledge and most ennobling experience of human sympathy and goodness. "As in adversity (says the proverb in Ecclesiasticus) an enemy cannot be hidden, so in prosperity a friend cannot be known." Thus, when we are just going to part outwardly are we often inwardly most abidingly united. At the beginning of a mortal disease, it might in a large number of cases be said, Now are you and those around you to be truly bound together and for ever. Hitherto you have been shareholders in a common fortune, now are you to dwell in one another's hearts. The dust was your brother, now you have become alive to the brotherhood of the spirit. How would the petty differences and infirmities, which at times disturb the harmony of our firesides,—what a multitude of home-sins would our charity be comprehensive enough to cover, if we were only to ask ourselves, Who will nurse us when our own strength faileth, and who will lead us down death's valley, and wipe away the dews from our foreheads; and who

will feel most lone when we are gone, and love best to tend our grave? It was a peculiarity of the excellent Archbishop Leighton, that he wished (if he might choose) to die at an inn, it being more in accordance with the idea of a pilgrim going home, and he thought the attentions of friends an "entanglement" to the dying. I call it a *peculiarity* in him, for few have entertained the same feeling; and surely death itself makes us look upon every house as only a place of sojourn; and not only has St. John abundantly set forth that love to one another and love to God are closely allied, but even Jesus Christ himself showed us, on the cross, that there is no inconsistency between the tenderest thoughtfulness for a mother, and committing the spirit into the hands of our heavenly Father. No; if there be anything like a right state of feeling in us, we need not forsake one another to commune calmly and fervently with God. In truth, instead of our friends standing between us and God, the love, which beams on us from them, is to us an emblem of the divine love; and we justly reason, if our fellow men so much care for us, how great, how all-sufficient must be God's care, and we apply to ourselves the language of St. Ambrose to St. Augustine's mother, in her solicitude about her

son, "Go thy ways, and God bless thee, for it is not possible that the child of these tears should perish." And, whosesoever the sickness may be, a voice is heard by all around, saying, Wait not till the hand is growing cold before you grasp it in hearty fellowship; neglect not to cherish genuine worth till one small lock of hair is all remaining of him to whom it belonged; forget not how much God has given you in your kindred, and how much you are, and how much more you *may be* to one another, till the void really comes, which never can be filled on earth!

One principal consideration yet remains. Not only does sickness, as we have already seen, lift up our thoughts and affections to invisible things, it is also itself *the method appointed by our Almighty Father for transferring us from these temporal regions, which we now inhabit, to those eternal regions at His right hand;* or, as the pious Whiston has it, it is "the bridge which carries the good man over from time to eternity, from sorrow to joy, from care and fear to his Father's house, from earth to Heaven." For a short season we are under the ministry of sorrow, that soon and for ever we may be under the ministry of joy. A tearful angel comes to take us away, but she bears us straightway to her rejoicing sisters, and

to the world in which there will be no tears and no night. But how can man's feeble pen adequately describe what "God hath prepared for them that love him?" We can only employ dim images of a glory and a happiness, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have never fully entered into the human heart. Even the sacred writers themselves seem to have been at a loss for a sufficient phrase, and therefore adopted everything that is blessed and lasting, as a figurative representation of the spiritual state. It was Paradise, with which we connect fond ideas of beauty, innocence, and enjoyment. It was the bright firmament above our heads, whither we are wont to look when we lift up our hands in prayer. It was heavenly Jerusalem, and eternal inheritance, and the just made perfect were said to sit with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. More than all, a voice is heard out of Heaven by the author of the apocalyptic vision, saying, God will dwell with us, and we shall be His people: *God himself will be with us, and be our God.* What! is sickness the divinely-appointed means of conveying us hence to such an abode, and yet, when our summons comes, we hold back and cry, not yet, spare us a little longer?

It is a trifling matter that we know not in what part of the universe we shall dwell, and the minuter circumstances of our outward lot. All such things are nothing by the side of the one vital truth, that we shall be in the presence of our God and behold His more immediate glory, and enter into a closer and holier communion with Him, than we can now conceive. Can we possibly wish more for our last breath, than that it should enable us, though in broken accents, to utter, I go to my *Father*, I shall rest in my *Father's* bosom, I am henceforth to dwell with my *Father* for evermore? Can we possibly need more information than that we shall have God's love and confidence, become His messengers, assist in carrying out His great scheme of universal redemption, and hold with Him a spiritual intercourse, that shall do more than anything else can, to raise us in the scale of being, and conform us to His likeness?

Not only, however, will our sickness introduce us to the more immediate presence of God, it will also introduce us to that of his best-beloved son, the once crucified, but now exalted Jesus. We shall see him, as he is, face to face. He will take us by the hand, and call us his brethren. Notwithstanding all we have read of him in those

faithful Gospel narratives, he is now a stranger compared with what he will become. And, much as he has already done for our souls, how much more will he do when he is constantly with us, when we are enabled to drink so much more deeply of his godlike spirit, when, with minds enlarged and hearts improved, we become more alive to his unrivalled greatness, and when, having a common cause, we all work together to carry out the stupendous plans of everlasting mercy!

But another joy awaits us still. There also shall we meet apostles, martyrs, philanthropists, philosophers,—all, who by being faithful unto death, have won the crown of life, and with them shall we participate in the new light continually bursting forth, and the fresh fields of usefulness and improvement ever unfolding themselves. Happy community! and such the society which we are to join when we enter the kingdom of God, when sickness has released us from our fetters of flesh!

There is one other most cherished characteristic of the celestial land. As we mingle with the multitude, which no man can number, we look (to use human language) with eager eyes for familiar faces, we listen with anxious ears for well-remembered tones, as all that is wanting to

fill up our cup of bliss. And there they are. There is the father, who, when he had trained and guided us so carefully through the season of youth, was called away just as we were becoming old enough to feel how much we owed him. There is the mother, who by the tenderness with which she nursed and led us in our childhood, and by the sweet atmosphere of love and comfort which she diffused throughout our home, has rendered "all other mothers venerable." There are the sisters with whom we had so frequently walked hand-in-hand, and enjoyed our childish games, and sat around the social hearth, and knelt side by side at prayer. There are those kindred spirits, whose companionship was so improving and gladdening, and whose absence at first rendered us so desolate, that we were ready to exclaim, "We will go and die with them." And there are others, whom, though we have never seen them, we know so well from the frequent and glowing reminiscences, to which with such untiring and breathless attention we have listened, and whom we so highly admire and so warmly reverence for their piety and virtues. Can we, then, be very sad at the thought of bidding farewell to things here below, when such rapturous scenes await us, and when those whom we leave behind, will so soon

come to us where we are? One would suppose our Christian feelings and hopes would forbid us to "love too well that life that keeps us from a better, or to fear that death that leads us to a better life," and incline us rather to follow a celebrated queen, who, reproving her ladies and women when she observed them weeping about her bed, said, "Weep not for me, I pray you; for God, by this sickness, calls me hence to enjoy a better life; and now I shall enter into the desired haven, towards which this frail vessel of mine has been a long time steering." *

It has often been to me a subject of wonder that, when we find our strength declining, we do not more especially delight to dwell on those of our brethren and fathers, who have already trod the pathway along which we are going, just as the returning emigrant has his thoughts and heart

* "In our long leisure, all sweet and soothing associations of rest,—of relief from anxiety and wearying thought,—of re-entrance upon society,—(a society how sanctified!)—of the realisation of our best conceptions of what is holy, noble, perfect,—all affections, all aspirations, gather round the idea of death, till it recurs at all our best moments, and becomes an abiding thought of peace and joy. . . . It is no slight privilege to have that grand idea which necessarily confronts every one of us, all clothed with loveliness *instead of horror*, or mere mystery."—*Life in the Sick Room*, p. 204.

full of his expecting home, and the warm greetings that await him. I wonder we do not more go back in memory and retrace all our steps, and, assembling in imagination the sweet companion-spirits of our early haunts, that were summoned from us, and the aged, who were passing out of the world when we came into it, and our choice friends and fellow-labourers through life, and the young in whom, in our turn, we had centred most cherished hopes,—regard them as separated from us only by the single step, which we are now about to take.* I wonder we do not more

* If the question be asked, how we are to think of the departed, when we know neither what material world they inhabit, nor with what bodies they are clothed, my reply is; let them come to us, as they naturally will in our hours of thoughtful memory, if we ourselves throw no hindrance in the way, viz., just as they appeared to us on earth in their best moments; glorified indeed they will be, as Moses and Elias were on the Mount of Transfiguration, but their old form, their old lineaments will be there. We lose them if we attempt to shape for them any new body. We can no more conceive of a world without such matter, or spirit, without such a body as we are already acquainted with, than we can think without the aid of images in our minds. Try to picture to yourselves such a spirit, and you know not how to proceed. You may as well try to speak in a language of which you have neither experience nor knowledge. Suppose our bodies hereafter be altogether different from what they are now, it no more

recall *individually* the holy and great, of whom we have read in history, and think what it will be to see them, to hear them, to commune with them, to be constantly with them. I wonder—not that the sober-minded should sometimes, in their seasons of meditative anticipation, almost fancy that they see Heaven open and hear angel-voices, but that there is not in *all* of us a greater yearning to join the mighty chorus of the temple not made with hands, where David will sing and Isaiah prophesy, as they never could have done while here, and to see Paul now that he is wearing his crown of rejoicing, and John now that his kingdom of love is come, and, above all, to be with Jesus as the first disciples were, and with God as Jesus was. I wonder likewise that we have not far more pleasure and consolation in looking forward to spiritual bodies in exchange for our natural bodies, and to the infinitely superior beauties and glories of the

matters, providing the spirits are the same, than it does that we express ourselves in one language rather than another. All that is really of moment is that we regard the *spirits* as living in more congenial regions, and think of them through a medium, which we can understand. Heaven may be, and I believe frequently is refined away to such a "point of evanescent spirituality," that it appears to us rather a beautiful dream-world, than a home that passeth not away.

eternal world. As it is, it is of partings we chiefly speak, not of meetings and glad accents of welcome, of *ceasing* to be as those, who are earthly, not of *beginning* to be as those, who are heavenly; and loud are our wails about earth's outward charms. If we may not live for years, we pray, permit us once more to behold the opening leaves and flowers, and to listen to the music of the woods. There have, however, been rare and memorable exceptions. We have known of cases, in which the Christian promises have been so fully entered into, that the season of sickness has been declared to be the happiest period of life. "To what a blessed company are we all hastening (has it been said), though I be a little forwarder than you." "The new scenes of each day (writes Lady Rachel Russell) made me often conclude myself very void of temper and reason, that I still shed tears of sorrow and not of joy, that so good a man (as her martyred husband) is landed safely on the happy shore of eternity." And as to the universe without; when Bishop Heber had extolled it in some of his best verses, he adds, if God's meaner works be such, how glorious must be the mansions of the redeemed; and Robert Nicoll's death-bed song is all of a deeper and better love and enjoyment of the forest and field and all

that God hath created good and lovely; and Izaac Walton, than whom earth has had no warmer lover, exclaims, "Lord, what music hast Thou provided for the saints in Heaven, when Thou affordest bad men such music on the earth;" and Wordsworth, than whom no one was ever more alive to nature's inspiration,—calls forth old men at sunset—not to take a last lingering farewell,—but he says, Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad and "see to *what fair countries ye are bound!*"

Thus to him, who drinks deeply of the spirit and wisdom of Christ, what animating prospects unfold themselves. I say to him *who drinks deeply of the spirit and wisdom of Christ*, for herein is vast and serious import. The cold Heaven of a creed or the mere Heaven of sentiment will not much serve us, when our hour of trial comes, if it be all we have; and I fear that is all a great many have. Else how is it, that, while we pour forth with our lips such eloquent and glowing delineations of our hereafter, there is in our hearts such an insuperable dread of death? how is it those words of infinite comfort have not more power over us, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God," and "Because I live, ye shall live also." Unless we have

"Christ *in us* the hope of glory," all other things will be to us of poor avail. Pleasing visions, beautiful poetry or flitting shadows will no more sustain us in adversity than they will form our characters in noble proportions, and animate us to make our "lives sublime." We want *reality*. Reality only can satisfy us. The things around us are at least visible and tangible, while they last,—riches, pleasure, worldly elevation are at least actual objects of the senses for a time; and experience has shown us with endless, and oftentimes most solemn reiteration that we are not willing to leave all these for mere peradventures and longings. The world of spirits, that only can effectually lift us up, is as real as the continent of Europe or America; and the God who dwells there is the God who created the firmament and the stars, and our Saviour is that Saviour who walked in Palestine eighteen centuries ago, and the saints and the martyrs are not images or pictures, but actual beings, and our dear friends, father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, all are to us not floating objects of fancy, but as truly alive as they used to be, when they were with us on the earth; every thing has the sure stamp of *reality* upon it, otherwise no wonder that with the fading senses, and the dwindling frame, the heart

sinks low indeed. The feeling to be desired cannot be better represented, though we should write ponderous volumes, than in the simple poem which so touched us in our childhood, entitled, "We are Seven." Five were at home, and two lay beneath "the church-yard tree;" yet were they seven still.

"'How many are you, then,' said I,
'If they two are in Heaven?'
Quick was the little maid's reply,
'O master! we are seven!'
'But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in Heaven!'
'T was throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, 'Nay, we are seven.'"

And she was right—there were as truly seven then as ever. Do we understand what our Lord meant, when he spoke of "receiving the kingdom of God as a little child?" Such a faith,—a faith which would *see* the departed living, which would admit of no more doubt of their being alive, than of the existence of those, who are constantly in sight, which in imagination would enable us to hold daily converse with them, how would it purify, strengthen, and elevate us!

I should not be giving free utterance to my own thoughts and feelings, were I not unreservedly

to confess that our own conduct with reference both to those, who have left and those who are leaving, the present world, is frequently altogether inconsistent with our christian profession, and therefore a great hindrance to the due appreciation of the consolations of Christ. The common practical view of sickness, what is it but that the saddest of all calamities has befallen us? an incurable disease, what a blight does it cast on everything around, as if mortality were not an incurable disease with us all! How few are there, who when they visit a suffering friend, do not depress rather than encourage him; instead of looking and bidding him look, to the effect on his character, reminding him that not one pang is sent to us in vain,—instead of pointing towards Heaven, —bountiful, gentle Heaven, whence all good, and whence nothing but good proceeds, and talking of the bright days coming, either here or in nobler spheres,—we speak just as if there were nothing to care for but a prolongation of his years, and act just as if it were a thing too dreadful to think of, that he should be called away—to Paradise!* And when a fellow crea-

* "One, and another, and another, comes to us with an earnest pressing upon us of the 'hope of relief,'—that talisman which looks so well till its virtues are tried! They tell us of renewed health and activity—of what it

ture dies, so terrible would his fate seem, that we scarcely dare mention it, and accordingly henceforth we seldom allude to him; and, when we do allude to him, we prefix that epithet of pity *poor* —designating him our "poor brother," as if God were no longer his Father, as if he were still, and would remain for ever in the grave,—instead of being a companion of angels, admitted to the highest privileges, and a participation in boundless love, knowledge and freedom. When Dr. Follen was spoken to concerning death, his answer was, "I am not going to die, I am going to live—life is before me, not death—life, never-ending life.

will be to enjoy ease again,—to be useful again,—to shake off our troubles and be as we once were. We sigh, and say it may be so; but they see that we are neither roused nor soothed by it. Then one speaks differently,—tells us we shall never be better,—that we shall continue for long years as we are, or shall sink into deeper disease and death; adding, that pain and disturbance and death are indissolubly linked with the indestructible life of the soul, and supposing that we are willing to be conducted on in this eternal course by Him whose thoughts and ways are not as ours,—but whose tenderness . . . . . Then how we burst in, and take up the word! What have we not to say from the abundance of our hearts, of that benignity,—that transcendent wisdom,—our willingness,—our eagerness,—our sweet security,—till we are silenced by our unutterable joy!" —*Life in the Sick Room*, p. 174.

What we call death is only one of the *incidents* of life. Death is the final revelation and confirmation of immortality." How truly Christian is this! and how Christian too "the words of a gifted lady, upon reading the obituary of Henry Ware,—'I see Henry Ware *has passed on!*' Passed on—beautiful thought! He has not stopped; he has not ceased to be; he has passed on in faith and duty and love to higher labours, and undefiled reward!" To the early Christians death was a birth—they called it to be born—to be born in the land of angels and blessed spirits. When an illustrious martyr was buried, they placed with him in the grave memorials of him, a few leaves of evergreen as emblems of immortality, and his copy of the Gospels, and, on earth, they "kept his memory green" by holding an anniversary at his tomb, and handing down from father to son his principal deeds: and when an intimate friend died, they spoke of him always as living, as taking an interest in their welfare still, and as waiting to greet them on their arrival above! No wonder disease and death are so repulsive to the generality of mankind, when we shroud in gloom the prospects of those whose heal this declining, and the memories of those who are gone. If they are actually removed to a state quite as real, only more bright and beau-

tiful than any earthly clime; if they have nothing to fear along death's dark vale, because God lighteth and leadeth them; if God and Jesus, and the good of all ages, and all their own dearest friends, be with them now,—what reason can there be for preserving such a profound and awful silence about them? When a friend travels to the other side of the globe to end his days, we converse respecting him with freedom and delight. Would that we had more of the living Christianity in the closing scenes of life!—The fountain of tears of course will and must flow; what I mean is, that our grief should be moderated by our Christian principles, we should see the bright as well as the dark side of our approaching change, and, never disconnecting the inseparable clauses, "He has left the world, he is gone to the Father," we should banish the word disconsolate as nowhere appropriate beneath the Divine rule. Let our outward emblems of bereavement express, not that we have sunk into helpless despondency, but—A loved one has been called home—his chair among us is vacant and we feel lonely—his spirit has returned to his Creator—our meditations follow him—the prevailing character of our minds is quiet and thoughtful—we think often of death and im-

mortality. And, believing that those, who "sleep in Jesus," are by no means objects of pity, but are still under the protecting wings of almighty love,—we should speak of them as we would speak of those, who dwell prosperously and happily in foreign lands, only always remembering that there is in all God's universe no land so blooming and joyous as that, which they have entered. How much less lonely would our journey down the vale of years seem! still more, what a wide and sacred field of profitable experience and instruction would become familiar to us! And when, from pain or infirmity, we ourselves are weary of this present life, instead of fearing to yield it up, because we have not *seen* what lieth in store for us, we should with tranquil joy exclaim,—Our course is ended, let us lay down our ashes with those of our fathers, that we may follow their spirits to life and blessedness everlasting.* "We ought not (says St. Cyprian) to

* "In no case of permanent illness can I conceive the idea [of our departure, and entrance upon another life] to be otherwise than familiar, under one aspect or another; so familiar, as that it is astonishing to us that we can obtain so little conversation upon it as a reality—a certainty in full view. To us, this seems more extraordinary than it would be if the friends of Parry, and Franklin, or Back, were, as the season for a Polar expe-

mourn for those who are delivered from the world by the call of the Lord, since we know that they are not lost, but only sent before us, that they have taken their leave of us only in order to precede us. We may long after them, as we do for those, who have sailed on a distant voyage, but not lament them. We may not here below put on dark robes of mourning, when they above have already put on the *white* robes of glory. We must not give the heathen any just occasion to accuse us of weeping for those as lost and extinct, of whom we say, that they live with God, and of failing to prove by the witness of our hearts the faith we confess with our lips. We, who live in hope, who believe in God, and trust that Christ has suffered for us and risen again, we, who abide in Christ, who through him and in him rise again, . . . why are we not in haste to see our country and home and to greet our elders? There await us a multitude of those, whom we love—fathers, brothers and children, who are secure already of

dition drew nigh, to talk to them about every thing else, but be constrained and shy on that. I say 'more extraordinary,' because it is not every body that is bound, sooner or later, to the North Pole, but only a few crews; whereas all have an interest in the passage of that other, that 'narrow sea,' and in the 'better country' which is its further shore."—*Life in the Sick Room*, p. 121.

their own salvation, and concerned only for ours. What mutual joy to them and to us, when we come into their presence, and into their embrace!" And still more affecting and powerful are the words of a mother to her son, who in the primitive ages of Christianity, was being led to martyrdom; "My son, my son, have the living God in thy heart. Be steadfast. There is nothing fearful in that death, which so surely conducts thee to life. Let thy heart be above, my son; look up to Him, who dwells in Heaven. To-day thy life is not taken from thee, but transfigured to a better. By a blessed exchange, my son, thou art this day passing to the life of Heaven."*

* We have a striking illustration of what unassisted reason may do in the case of Socrates; "I cannot persuade Criton," said he, "my friends, that I am Socrates, who now disputes with you, and methodizes every part of the discourse; but he thinks, that I am he, whom he will shortly behold dead, and asks how I ought to be buried. But all that long discourse, which some-time since I addressed to you, in which I asserted that, after I had drunk the poison, I should no longer remain with you, but should depart to certain felicities of the blessed, this I seem to have declared to him in vain, though it was undertaken to console both you and myself. Be surety, therefore, for me to Criton, to the reverse of that, for which he became surety for me to the judges; for he was

To those, to whom Christianity thus comes in spirit and with power, what does it matter at what *period* they walk and when they quit the earth? "Those that three thousand years ago died unwillingly, and stopped death two days or a week, what is their gain? where is that week?" The *fact of existence*—this, this is the all-important thing. *He has lived*—how much is implied in these few words! He was alive, he trod the earth, he filled up one place in society, in God's family: in the mind of the Christian, how many delightful anticipations are bound up with these simple statements! such a one *has lived*, is as much as to say, *he will live again, he will live for ever*. If he lived here, he will live also hereafter. If he were an inhabitant of the present world, he will be an inhabitant likewise of the eternal regions. If he filled up one vacancy in the society and family of earth, there is a vacancy for him

my bail that I should remain; but be you my bail that I shall not remain when I die, but shall depart hence, that Criton may bear it the more easily, and may not be affected when he sees my body burnt or buried, as if I were suffering some dreadful misfortune,—and that he may not say at my interment, that Socrates is laid out, or is carried out, or is buried. For be well assured of this, my friend Criton, that when we speak amiss, we are not only blamable as to our expressions, but likewise do ome evil to our souls."

in the society and family of Heaven. Thus how immeasurably more important is the fact of life, than the age, in which we are born, the generation, to which we belong, the period, in which we sink into our rest!

Here methinks I hear, as I have often heard, what you say is, I firmly believe, true, and would be to me most encouraging, if I could only feel as I ought, but I am so weak and low-spirited. I have read and thought and prayed, and done all I could, and still am unable calmly to lift up my head. To such, I would add, yet needest thou one thing—*patience*. Continue to do all thou canst and then wait, and still wait with uplifted eyes and a prepared heart. Perhaps the depression is simply physical. If not, canst thou not watch one hour? It is the testimony of the devout Thomas à Kempis, "I never found any so holy and religious, that he had not sometimes a withdrawing of grace." Have not all of us, indeed, who know anything of life, and human infirmities, learnt that it is only by degrees that our wills can be entirely conformed as we could wish to God's, and have we not all fervently prayed "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief?" Even Christ himself passed through such severe struggles, that great drops as it were of blood fell from

him, while he implored that if it were possible, the cup of his bitterness might pass from him. But there was the "if it be possible," showing that the power within was not quite overcome; and there was the noble conclusion, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done," —and then descended angels from Heaven with congratulations and comfort. Such conflicts are an essential part of the divine economy; they are *the hardships;* sickness, affliction were nothing without them,—but *it is rising up with our burden on our backs, that proves our strength.* We cannot, however, I repeat, suddenly become men in spirit; we must *grow* up to our full stature by exercise, deprivation and prayer. Do not for a moment admit that your Father in Heaven, who tempers the blast to the shorn lamb, will render your powers of endurance and your sufferings disproportionate.*

* "If the sickness be but continued long enough,—if the struggle be not broken off before it is fairly exhausted,—victory will declare itself on the side of peace. We may be long in passing through the experience of weakness, humiliation and submission; but up through acquiescence we must rise, sooner or later,—true things separating themselves infallibly from the transient, and all that is important revealing itself in its due proportions, till our vision is cleared and our hearts are at rest."—*Life in the Sick Room*, p. 210.

In conclusion, let me enumerate a few plain rules, whereby I believe my sick friend is most likely to make the disposition I have been setting forth his own :—

(1) Remember that no season of trouble is necessarily sanctifying,—it is only a season favourable to deep and holy impressions. A most earnest voice comes to us from the unseen world, calling away our thoughts and affections from their old haunts of gain and pleasure, and directing us where the true realities are to be found ; but it is a voice which may be disobeyed. All depends on the spirit in which we receive its lessons. Sufferings unhallowed probably tend to harden and lower, rather than refine and elevate us.

(2) *Let your Christian views of Divine Providence and of life here and hereafter be interwoven with your daily thoughts, habits and pursuits, so as to become a part of your being.* If you always regard the world as a place of discipline, you will never be surprised at having something to endure. If you always bear in mind that you are on a pilgrimage of uncertain length to a better country, you will not be surprised at any time to reach the gate of death. And you will not leave repentance to your last moments, but every day and every

hour will you humble yourself before God, and your every act will be to Him a prayer for forgiveness.

(3) *Regulate your habits of reading, reflection and prayer.* You may not be able to read much. Let a portion at least of what you read be especially suited to your particular circumstances, familiarizing you with the thoughts and examples of the best men and with God's love and will and with Heaven. How appropriate are some of the Psalms and parts of the Gospels and Epistles! If I specify any other works,—there are none, which seem to me more valuable than many chapters of Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying, and of Thomas à Kempis's Imitation of Christ, and the whole of Mrs. Follen's Selections from Fenelon.

Sickness naturally gives rise to serious *reflection.* The channel in which our thoughts flow depends in some measure on ourselves. Instead therefore of querulouly murmuring—How much worse off am I than others—indulge in a lofty, holy strain, —God calls me forth to suffering—I will go through it bravely—we know not what the issue will be, but He knows, for He appoints it. He is leading me some-whither,—and if I patiently submit and earnestly do His bidding, it will be some-whither onward or upward.

And most sustaining at such a season is *prayer*, truly the "rest of our cares and the calm of our tempest." Let nothing prevent your holding frequent, heartfelt communion with the Father of your spirit. You cannot go up to the public sanctuary with the multitude on the Lord's day, you cannot kneel down at the family altar, but He condescends to come down into the smallest chamber, when a pure and contrite heart is there; your feeblest accents not less certainly reach His ear than do the acclamations of united millions.

(4) Above all, let me impress upon you the necessity of resolving to fit your soul, as much as you possibly can, for life or death, by cultivating that *practical goodness*, which is the sum and substance of all religion. By goodness, of course, I do not mean a mere cold calculating morality,—I include our whole Christian duty—our duty to God as our Father, who requires love and obedience, —our duty to mankind as our brethren, who need our sympathy and affection, and our duty to ourselves, as heirs of immortality, who need ever a greater purity of heart, ever a more steadfast continuance in well-doing, ever a more complete consecration of ourselves to God and spiritual interests. Such a goodness as Sir Walter Scott spoke of, when, just before he quitted his tabernacle of clay,

he called his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, to him, and said, "Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort, when you come to lie here." Such a goodness as the immortal Locke had in view, when he penned that letter to a friend to be delivered after his decease, in which he writes, "This life is a scene of vanity, that soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hope of another life. This is what I can say upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up your account." And such a goodness as an aged minister had in his mind, when, "at his last interview with a brother minister, having enlarged for some time on the importance of practical religion, he begged his friend to enforce it upon his hearers, as the highest of all human concerns; and tell them," added he, speaking with the authority of a dying man, "tell them, I say so!"* Determine, then, upon leading

* "I know of but one remedy against the fear of death that is effectual, and that will stand the test either of a sick bed, or of a sound mind;—and that is *a good life*, a clear conscience, an honest heart, and a well-ordered conversation; so to live before we die, as we shall wish we had, when we come to die."—*Norris.*

a life as nearly as you can like that, which you imagine among the angels of light. If to see a brother walking heavenward be to see our upward course, our own heavenward walk is going to Heaven ourselves. Nor should you resolve merely that you will begin, when you get well; the commencement must be made *now*. Without the resurrection actually begun *in* us, without the inward evidence of the spirit, we can never adequately realize the idea of immortality. Though you are withheld from society, you have yet precious means and opportunities. You may be cheerfully submissive to God's all-wise appointments. You may endeavour to give as little trouble as possible to those around you. You may show your sense of their kindness in a thousand little ways. You may do much towards laying the foundation of a very great improvement in your character. How much may you do! In your silent retreat, you may become great, yea godlike. There is no truer act of virtue, than to be calm, self-sustained and devout amidst tribulation and anguish. You may rise above the hero or the philosopher; in your chamber you may accomplish within yourself a work which will outlive empires and stars.*

* "If we cannot pursue a trade or a science, or keep house, or help the state, or write books, or earn our own

And, now, my friend, I have only to add my farewell. I have spoken to you out of a heart full of sympathy. I trust I have been to you a minister of strength and comfort. I have endeavoured to enlarge and elevate your views, and still more to lift up *your own thoughts and spirit* to Christ and God. May you seek God through Christ for yourself, my friend; then will you be strong and fear not; then will *all* other things be added to you.

bread or that of others, we can do the work to which all this is only subsidiary,—we can cherish a sweet and holy temper,—we can vindicate the supremacy of mind over body,—we can, in defiance of our liabilities, minister pleasure and hope to the gayest who come prepared to receive pain from the spectacle of our pain; we can, here as well as in Heaven's courts hereafter, reveal the angel growing into its immortal aspect, which is the highest achievement we could propose to ourselves, or that grace from above could propose to us, if we had a free choice of all possible conditions of human life."—*Life in the Sick Room*, p. 162.

THOUGHTS ON SICKNESS.

FROM JEREMY TAYLOR.*

"I shall carry your meditations awhile into the chambers of Death, where you shall find the rooms fit to converse with your most retired thoughts, which begin with a sigh, and proceed in deep consideration, and end in a holy resolution.

"Remember that God doth minister proper aids and supports to every one of His servants whom he visits with His rod. He knows our needs, He pities our sorrows, He relieves our miseries, He supports our weakness, He bids us ask for help, and He promises to give us all this, and He usually gives us more. When, for instance, He lays a sickness upon us, He commonly makes us apt for suffering, confining us to an inactive condition, and producing all those feelings, which naturally tend to humility of spirit, and thus verifies His assurance that He will lay no more upon us, than He will enable us to bear, but together with the affliction, will find a way for escape. We have verily two or three pro-

* Selected from various parts of his Holy Dying.

mises, in which we may safely lodge ourselves, and roll from off our thorns, and find ease and rest; *God hath promised to be with us in our trouble, and to be with us in our prayers, and to be with us in our hope and confidence!*

"Remember that all men pass along the valley, in which you are now walking; the bravest, the wisest and the best men have been subject to sad diseases; and it is esteemed a prodigy, that a man should live to a long age and not be sick.

"Take away the circumstances of death and it is the same harmless thing that a poor shepherd suffered yesterday, or a maid-servant to-day; and at the same time in which you die, in that very night a thousand creatures die with you.

"If sickness were always a testimony of God's anger, and a violence to a man's whole condition, then it were a huge calamity: but because God sends it to His servants, to His children, to little infants, to apostles and saints, with designs of mercy, to preserve their innocence, to overcome temptation, to try their virtue, to fit them for rewards, it is certain that sickness never is an evil but by our own faults; and, if we will do our duty, we shall be sure to turn it into a blessing.

Sickness is an opportunity, and the proper scene of exercising some virtues; it is that agony

in which men are tried for a crown. And if we remember what glorious things are spoken of Faith, we may easily imagine that it must have in it a work and a difficulty, in some proportion answerable to so great effects. For in our health and clearer days it is easy to talk of putting trust in God: we readily trust Him for life when we are in health, for provisions when we have fair revenues, and for deliverance when we are newly escaped; but let us come to sit upon the margin of our grave; let the storm arise and the keels toss till the cordage crack; then is Faith brought into the theatre, and so exercised that if it abides but to the end of the contention, we may see the work of Faith, which God will hugely crown. The same I say of Hope, and of Charity, or the love of God, and of Patience, which is a grace produced from the mixture of all these; they are virtues which are greedy of danger. No man is more miserable than he that hath no adversity; for he is not tried whether he be good or bad.

"Sickness moreover takes away the sense of all the cross fortunes, which amaze the spirits of some men and transport them certainly beyond all the limits of patience. Here all losses and disgraces, domestic cares and public evils, the apprehensions of pity and a social calamity, the fears of want

and the troubles of ambition, lie down and rest upon the sick man's pillow.

"In sickness the soul dresses herself for immortality; and, first, she unties the strings of vanity, that made her upper garment cling to the world, and sit uneasy, putting off the light and fantastic summer robe of lust and wanton appetite, and freeing the spirit from the petulant solicitations of the passions, which in health were so busy and restless. The soul, secondly, by the help of sickness knocks off the fetters of pride and evil complacencies. She draws the curtains and stops the light from coming in, and takes the pictures down, those fantastic images of self-love, and gay remembrances of vain opinion and popular noises. Then the spirit stoops into the sobrieties of humble thoughts, and feels corruption chiding the forwardness of fancy, and allaying the vapours of conceit and factious opinions. For humility is the soul's grave, into which she enters not to die, but to meditate and inter some of her troublesome appendages. Next, as the soul is still undressing, she takes off the roughness of her great and little angers and animosities, and receives the oil of mercies and smooth forgiveness, fair interpretations and gentle answers, designs of reconcilement and Christian atonement in their

places. A man may carry hostile dispositions with him into his sickness, yet there he will not find them, and in despite his own malice, his soul shall find some rest.

"Though, however, sickness invites to repentance, and makes it appear necessary, yet let us not so rely upon it as to trust the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of our piety to such an estate, which for ever leaves it imperfect; for though to some persons it adds degrees, and ministers opportunities, and exercises single arts with great advantage in passive graces, yet it is never an entire or sufficient instrument for the change of our condition from the state of spiritual death to the liberty and life of the sons of God. Whatever must be done in sickness ought to be done in health, only let us observe that sickness, as a good monitor, chastises our neglect of duty, and forces us to live as we always should, and then all these dressings and solemnities of death, are nothing else than part of a religious life, which we ought to have exercised all our days.

"At the first address and presence of sickness, then, stand still and arrest thy spirit, that it may, without amazement or affright, consider that this was that thou lookedst for, and wast always certain should happen. Recollect if it be sharp, it

will not last long, and if it be long, it will be easy and tolerable. Think of things as they think, who stand by you, and as you did when you stood by others,—that it is a blessed thing to be patient, that still thou art in the care of God, and in the condition of a son; and do not suppose that He is only to be found in a great prayer, or a solemn office. He is moved by a sigh, by a tear, by an act of love, and therefore when your pain is great, be content, if, for a season, you cannot employ your mind in devout offices, and quiet meditations, but must concentrate all your strength in *bearing* with fortitude.

"Further, endeavour to realize the felicities of saints and angels,—that there are creatures more noble than we,—that above there is a country better than ours,—that the inhabitants know more and know better, and are in places of rest and desire; and first learn to value it, and then learn to purchase it, and death cannot be a formidable thing, which lets us into so much joy, and so much felicity.

"And if your desire of life be still strong, make no excuses, neither cover thy fear with pretences, but suppress it rather with acts of severity and ingenuity. Some are not willing to submit to God's sentence and arrest of death,

till they have finished such a design, or made an end of the last paragraph of their book; or raised such portions for their children, or preached so many sermons, or built their house, or planted their orchard, or ordered their estate with such advantages. It is well for the modesty of these men that the excuse is ready; but if it were not, it is certain they would search one out: for an idle man is never ready to die, and is glad of any excuse; and a busied man hath always something unfinished, and he is ready for everything but death. They that 3,000 years ago died unwillingly, and stopped death two days or stayed it a week, what is their gain? where is that week? Say no more, but when God calls, lay aside thy papers, and dress thy soul.

"Nor let any sufferings make you call violently for death. You are not patient unless you be content to live wherever the General hath placed thee; stir not from thy station, until thou beest called off, but abide so that death may come to thee by the design of Him, who intends it to be for thine advantage. Never say I can endure no more, for God would not have sent it, if He had not known thee strong enough to abide it,—only He, that knows thee well already, would take this occasion to make thee know thyself.

Do not eagerly long for evening, lest when it come thou shouldst find the reward of him that was weary of his work.

"Finally, propound to your eyes and heart the example of the Holy Jesus upon the cross; he endured more for thee than thou canst, either for thyself or him: and remember, that if we be put to suffer, and do suffer in a good cause, or in a good manner, so that in any sense our sufferings be conformable to his sufferings, or can be capable of being united to his, we shall reign together with him. The highway of the cross, which the King of Sufferings hath trodden before us, is the way to ease, to a kingdom, and to happiness."

THE TEACHINGS OF SICKNESS.

The light, in which sickness sets the body and earth before us is very right and important. We are prone to forget that they are not firm and ours for ever; and sickness warns us that the body is only a tenement of clay, in which we dwell for a time, and one, too, which soon becomes very undesirable, and that earth is ours only just so long as we retain possession of our bodies, whereby to use it. All this it is exceedingly good for us to know and feel, and sickness brings it home to us as no preaching or reading can do. And then our thoughts wander forth in search of a better, a more abiding habitation, and we thus obtain our most glorious visions of futurity and God. And while we are passing away from earth, we find that there is much, which we regret to leave, that, therefore, we have loved much and enjoyed much; and gentle voices are heard around us, and our helplessness brings ready ministering hands, and loving faces gather near our bed, and we ask our friends to love us, when we are gone, and we are sure they will, and we tell them we shall think of them and in spirit visit them, and we talk rapturously of our re-union. Bowed down

though we are, we yet rise to unknown heights,—we feel more sure of life, we more fully realize one another's undying worth, we more heartily lift up our voices to God in prayer and praise than we ever did or could in health.

"Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator."—1 Peter, iv. 19.

Nothing does so establish the mind amidst the rollings and turbulence of present things, as both a look above them, and a look beyond them; above them to the steady and good hand, by which they are ruled, and beyond them to the sweet and beautiful end, to which by that hand they shall be brought.

Consider God as thy Father, who hath taken special charge of thee, and of thy soul; thou hast given it to Him, and He hath received it. And upon this consideration, study to follow His will in all, to have no will but His. This is thy duty and thy wisdom. Nothing is gained by spurning and struggling, but to hurt and vex thyself; but by complying all is gained—sweet peace. It

is the very secret, the mystery of solid peace within, to resign all to His will, to be disposed of at His pleasure, without the least contrary thought. And thus like two-faced pictures, those sufferings and troubles, and whatsoever else, while beheld on the one side as painful to the flesh, give an unpleasant visage; yet, go about a little, and look upon them as thy Father's will, and then all is smiling, beautiful, and lovely. This I would recommend to you, not only for temporals, as easier there, but in spiritual things, your comforts and sensible enlargements, to love all that He does. It is the sum of Christianity to have thy will crucified, and the will of thy Lord thy only desire. Whether joy or sorrow, sickness or health, life or death, in all, "Thy will be done."

But if you would commit your soul to the keeping of God, know that He is a holy God: and an unholy soul that walks in any way of wickedness, whether known or secret, is no fit commodity to put into His pure hand to keep.

You will find that a little sin will shake your trust, and disturb your peace, more than the greatest sufferings; yea, in those sufferings your assurance and joy in God will grow and abound most, if sin be kept out. All the winds which blow about the earth from all points, stir it not;

only that within the bowels of it, makes the earth quake. I do not mean that for infirmities a Christian ought to be discouraged. But take heed of walking in any way of sin, for that will unsettle thy confidence. Innocency and holy walking make the soul of a sound constitution, which the counterblasts of affliction wear not out, nor alter. Sin makes it so sickly and crazy, that it can endure nothing. Therefore, study to keep your consciences pure, and they shall be peaceable, yea, in the worst times commonly most peaceable, and best furnished with spiritual confidence and comfort.

The other ground of quietness is in seeing that your reproachings and suffering are not endless, yea, that they are short, they shall end, quickly end, and end in glory; be not troubled about them, overlook them. The eye of faith will do it. A moment gone and what are they? This is the great cause of our disquietness in present troubles and griefs,—we forget their end. We are affected by our condition in this present life, as if it were all, and it is nothing. Oh, how quickly shall all the enjoyments and all the sufferings of this life pass away, and be as if they had not been!

LESSONS OF SORROW.

God has many ways of teaching us; and from our childhood we are ever learning, from parents, and teachers, and sermons, and books; from the holy scriptures and the worship of the church, and from the changes and chances of the world: but a season of suffering is beyond them all. When pain searches into the body or the spirit, we feel as if we had awoke up to know that we had learned nothing really until now. There is laid upon us a mighty hand, from whose shadow we cannot flee. God is come nigh to us, and is dealing with us at last, one by one. It is our turn now; and we feel as if we saw the tokens of His presence shaping themselves for a moment to our sight, and then withdrawing themselves again; coming and going in an awful way, as if to gaze upon us, and search out our very thoughts: and we become conscious that there is no rest in store for us until we put off this body, and pass into the realities of the world unseen. Such are the effects wrought by sorrows, sickness, bodily pains, anxieties, and the like. They seem to take away the visionary parts of our life, and to turn it into a severe and im-

pressive reality: they make all our past life appear as a mere day-dream, as if we had never been in earnest till now. We have heard of submission, and resignation, and giving up of our own will: but it has been as yet, little more than hearsay. At last we find these things required at our hands. We must give more than words now: God is exacting realities. And then there comes down upon the mind, as it were, a full stream of words and sayings, which we have heard or read in time past, and only half understood, and well nigh forgotten. They have lain pent up in the hidden recesses of our memory, not altogether forgotten, and yet hardly remembered: like dormant truths, which lie in the reason of children, ready to start into vivid life when wisely touched, and yet sometimes never elicited, and therefore never known: so the things which we understand not, when we first hear or read them, rise up as lights "in the day of visitation;" half-truths unfold their full outline; scattered truths draw together into an expressive context; and we seem to hear a voice saying, "Why would you not understand this before? Why make all this necessary? It is not spoken out more plainly now than it was years ago; but you would not understand." This is the case

with all bright and blessed truths: they are quickened with a living energy. The promises of Heaven, and the times of refreshing, and the rest of the saints, and the love of God, and the presence of Christ, which we have so long thought of, and talked about, and felt after, and yet never seemed to grasp,—all these likewise become realities. They seem to gather round us, and shed sensible influences of peace upon our suffering hearts: and this is what we mean when we say, "I have long *known* these things to be true; but now I *feel* them to be true!" As Job, after his trial, said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee."

THE BRIGHT SIDE OF HUMAN SUFFERING.

When, on a cloudy evening, a streak of sunshine breaks through, how bright is that ray, how rich and golden are the edges of the clouds! So is it with sorrow. Sorrow brings with it meditation; the depths of our nature are more explored, and then it is we most strongly "feel that we are greater than we know." Friends, moreover, gather round us, and shed upon us the brightness and blessedness of sympathy. Sorrow, again, suggests holy and grand thoughts of God, and leads us to a communion with Him more sacred and elevating than any other exercise in which we can engage. Sorrow lifts up our souls to Heaven, the land of everlasting day. Greatness, strength, faith, hope, charity are the bright side of human nature, and never are they so much called forth as amidst the toils and struggles of our earthly pilgrimage. When we are nursing one who is putting off this earthly tabernacle, and he is calm and peaceful, and we see that he is putting on immortality, we cannot say there is nothing bright for us. When we are on the bed of sickness, and the ministrations

of affection around us are unceasing, and we are sustained by Christian fortitude and the Christian promises, we cannot say that we have nothing bright to rejoice in. I have never lost a dear and virtuous friend, but Heaven has been brought nearer to me, and I have more than ever wished for an angel's purity and goodness, and less than ever thought death terrible.

DEATH AND SLEEP.

Sleep is the favourite image for death in the sacred scriptures. Jesus Christ used it both in the case of Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth. She is not dead, but sleepeth. St. Paul writes, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them, which are asleep." And we cannot easily forget the touching and most expressive phrase, "those who sleep in Jesus." The grave is the child's cradle, the old man's bed. There "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." "I heard a voice out of Heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord from

henceforth. Yea, saith the spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Let us, however, dwell on the beautiful analogy a little while in its details, and we shall feel more its deep truth and most sweet comfort.

Death, as a sleep, is a *state from which we shall awake.* It is not a final state, but preparatory to another. "I am going to sleep as well as you," said a truly great and holy man, to his grandchildren, whom he had called to his bedside as usual for evening prayers, and to whom he felt he must now bid a last earthly farewell, "I am going to sleep as well as you, for death is only a good sound sleep in the grave, and we shall meet again." And, not only are sleep and death states, from which we shall awake, but they are also *states from which we shall awake refreshed and invigorated.* As he, who lies down in the evening, feeble and toilworn, rises in the morning with renovated strength and spirits, ready to encounter fresh labors and fatigues, so he, who closes his eyes in the sleep of death, awakens to a higher realization of life and with renewed energies and powers. Death is the repose of that night, on which is to dawn the glorious eternal day. Once more; death and sleep are alike in *the manner of their approach.* We lay our heads

upon our pillows, after having worn ourselves out with work, and, silently and unconsciously, we glide into the world of dreams. So is it in the majority of instances with death. Faculty after faculty becomes dormant—the thoughts, the feelings, the senses are gently lulled, and no longer are we numbered among the denizens of earth. The previous sufferings may of course have been intense or protracted, and in some cases may extend nearer to the last hour than others, but as "sensibility declines in proportion as life ebbs," the last hours themselves are almost always calm and serene. "The prostration of disease, like healthful fatigue, engenders a growing stupor, a sensation of subsiding softly into a welcome slumber." There is, therefore, no reason for the dread, which so many feel, of a mysterious, agonizing struggle between the body and the spirit at the separation,—as if there were unwillingness on the part of the earthly tenement to let its tenant go. Not only do physicians tell us, that the feeling at last is one of languor, which imperceptibly passes into insensibility, but we have the same testimony also from those, who have been on the very verge of the grave, and yet have been restored, and even from the dying themselves. "Methought (writes the celebrated

Montaigne of his own feelings after an accident, which was supposed to be fatal) my life only hung upon my lips, and I shut my eyes to help thrust it out, and took a pleasure in languishing and letting myself go." "If I had strength enough to hold a pen (said William Hunter) I would write how easy and delightful it is to die." "Mother, I am going to sleep," were the last words of one, who in my own home passed on in her childhood. "I am, to be sure, (said the devout Schleiermacher, whose whole life had been dedicated to the attainment of a higher union between the religious and the speculative,) I am, to be sure, properly speaking, in a state, which fluctuates between consciousness and the absence of consciousness, but inwardly I am spending most delightful moments; I am constrained to be constantly in the midst of the profoundest speculations, which, however, are here identical with the most heartfelt religious experiences." On another occasion near his departure, he said, "I have had a most beautiful dream, which has left with me quite a peculiar and salutary frame of mind." And the great church-historian Neander, who was almost unequalled in his devotedness to his pupils, in his last illness imagined himself surrounded by his class, went through

his accustomed exposition, dictated a few paragraphs of his history, said, "I am tired and will go to sleep," and so ceased to breathe. The instances of a similar kind on record are without number. A great many have come within my own knowledge, and, I doubt not, within the knowledge also of most of my readers. Even the martyr Stephen, who was subjected to a violent death, is represented as at last "falling asleep."

LETTER FROM A FATHER TO A DAUGHTER IN SICKNESS.

"My very dear M——,—You have heard, and I am sure with much satisfaction, that I am apparently recovering, after having long been, in my own opinion and that of my various medical attendants, at death's door. Having had so many relapses, and such new attacks of disease in divers forms, I dare not be sanguine in my hopes, but I think the probability is that I may be spared a little longer for the benefit of my family and congregation.

"I am yet so feeble, that I cannot extend my

movements beyond my two rooms; it would be imprudent and might be dangerous, to attempt to go up and down stairs. This cuts me off from the possibility of seeing you at present, and it wrings my heart, my dearest M——, to hear of your extreme weakness and suffering without being able to drop into your ear any balm of consolation. I am therefore obliged to content myself with the poor and cold substitute of a few written words.

"I can speak to you, my dear child, as one who has been in extremity and tried danger; my comfort always was, as yours, I trust, is, that we are in the hands of a merciful Father, who doth not afflict or grieve us, without a benevolent purpose. Let us exercise faith in the Divine goodness, and try to imitate the resignation and submission of the Son of Man, our heaven-exalted brother, the best beloved of the sons of God, and we shall be accepted, notwithstanding our imperfections, and in sorrow and trouble there will be laid and felt underneath us the Everlasting Arm. The Gospel promise is not only of forgiveness and redemption in the world to come, but of help and mercy in the present world: no temptation, no trial befals us, but what is common to man, and He that lays on the

affliction, will make a way to escape or give strength to suffer, without losing confidence in our Saviour and in his and our God and Father.

"You have seen and experienced enough, dear M——, to learn that there is no unalloyed happiness on earth; our very pleasures are dashed with pains, to make them suitable to our mortal condition. Happy is it for us that we learn from the teaching and the example of Jesus, the doctrine of life and immortality,—and that we are allowed to indulge the blissful hope of the reunion of parents and children and endeared friends, and their junction with all the wise and good in a state infinitely beyond the clouds and shadows of time and sense.

"Cultivate, I beseech you, even in your darkest moments, these enlivening thoughts and joyful expectations; give yourself up, whether for life or death, to the Father in Heaven; trust all that you love,—your husband, children and family,—to the never-failing Providence of Him who is Love, who hath said that He will keep that which you commit to Him to the day of merciful restitution.

"My prayers ascend for you, with those for myself and all our dear friends, to the Throne of the Heavenly Grace. May the Lord God Al-

mighty keep and save and bless you! May He alleviate, if it seem not fit to His Infinite Wisdom to remove your affliction! May He, according to His fatherly promise, make all your bed in sickness, an earnest of comfort and joy above all present conception for ever and ever!

"I am, my very dear M——,

"Your ever affectionate and sympathizing Father,

"ROBERT ASPLAND."

THE EVILS OF LIFE.

"In regard to the evils of life, they trouble me less and less. I see pain and death everywhere. All animated nature suffers and dies. Life begins and ends in pain. Then pain has a great work to do. Then there is a vast good before us, to outweigh and annihilate it. Its universality reconciles me to it. I do not ask to be exempted from the common lot. In this, as in all things, I wish to go with my race. I pretend not to explain events, but I do see glorious issues of suffering, and these are enough. Once, had I been called upon to create the earth, I should have done as the many would now—I should have laid it out

in pleasure-grounds, and given man Milton's occupation of tending flowers. But I am now satisfied with this wild earth, its awful mountains and depths, steeps, and torrents. I am not sorry to learn that God's end is a virtue far higher than I should have prescribed."

THE HEART'S PEACE.

"We are wrong in thinking of peace as something which is to come only in future life. There is no reason for expecting it hereafter but its having begun now. Every true surrender of selfish principles to God and the inward monitor is the beginning of Heaven and Heaven's peace. The best proof of a Heaven to come is its dawning within us now. We are blinded by common errors to the degree of celestial good, which is to be found on earth. I would not say 'labour for it;' for a selfish impatience may remove it from us. I would say, accept your inward and outward trials as appointed by the friend of your soul for its progress and perfection, and use them for this end, not doubtingly or impetuously, but con-

fidingly; and just as fast as the power of Christian virtue grows within you, peace and Heaven will come, unless, for some greater good, present happiness be obstructed by physical causes. Be of good cheer."

THE BENEFITS OF AFFLICTION.

"God intends that the heart, softened by grief, should receive deeper impressions, and that life, by putting on a more solemn aspect, should be viewed by us more wisely in its vast bearings and consequences. Who of us is not conscious of great defects of character, especially of deficiency in piety, in just regards to God? Affliction is intended to carry religion from the exterior into the depths and inmost recesses of the heart, to convert belief into a living persuasion, to raise prayer from a form into a spiritual communion, to change the invisible world from a dim shadow into a substantial and glorious reality. In this process the redemption of the soul consists, and this is the noblest work which God is carrying on upon

earth, and, although secret and silent, it will one day be seen to transcend in excellence and beneficence any or all of men's tumultuous labours."

LIFE'S CLOSE.

I live as in the midst of death, expecting to stay here but a short time and knowing that suffering may fill up this short space. But, though life is even now truly a blessing to me, the future world opens on me still more brightly. The longer I live, the more I see the light breaking through the clouds; I am sure the sun is above them. As this solid earth and all that it contains, seem to me more and more evanescent, immortality seems more real. Without being discouraged as to the prospects of society, I feel that none of us can hope to see so much of Heaven on earth, as to make us wish to live always here. What infinite thanks do we owe to him, who hath brought life and immortality to light! Truly life is not a little cup dipped from the stream of time. It is itself a stream, and, though at its birth, it may dance and send forth cheerful murmurs as it

does not afterwards, still it is intended to flow as it advances through more beautiful regions, and to adorn its shores with richer verdure and more abundant harvests.

HEAVEN.

Were there a country on earth, uniting all that is beautiful in nature, all that is great in virtue, genius and the liberal arts, and numbering among its citizens, the most illustrious patriots, poets, philosophers, philanthropists of our age, how eagerly should we cross the ocean to visit it! and how immeasurably greater is the attraction of Heaven! There live the elder brethren of the creation, the sons of the morning, who sang for joy at the creation of our race; there, the great and good of all ages and climes; the friends, benefactors, deliverers, ornaments of their race; the patriarch, prophet, apostle, and martyr; the true heroes of public and still more of private life; the father, mother, wife, husband, child, who, unrecorded by man, have walked before God in the beauty of love and self-sacrificing virtue. There

are all who have built up in our hearts the power of goodness and truth, the writers, from whose pages we have received the inspiration of pure and lofty sentiments, the friends, whose countenances have shed light through our dwellings, and peace and strength through our hearts. There they are gathered together, safe from every storm, triumphant over evil: and they say to us, Come and join us in our everlasting blessedness; come and bear part in our song of praise; share our adoration, friendship, progress and works of love. They say to us, cherish now in your earthly life that spirit and virtue of Christ, which is the beginning and dawn of Heaven, and we shall soon welcome you, with more than human friendship, to our own immortality.

Address from the Book of Common Prayer.

Dearly beloved, know this, that Almighty God is the Lord of life and death, and of all things to them pertaining, as youth, strength, health, age, weakness, and sickness. Wherefore, whatsoever your sickness is, know you certainly that it is God's visitation. And for what cause soever this sickness is sent unto you; whether it be to try your patience for the example of others, and that your faith may be found in the day of the Lord, laudable, glorious, and honourable, to the increase of glory and endless felicity; or whether it be sent unto you to correct and amend in you whatsoever doth offend the eyes of your heavenly Father; know you certainly, that if you truly repent of your sins, and bear your sickness patiently, trusting in God's mercy, manifested by His dear Son Jesus Christ, and render unto Him humble thanks for His fatherly visitation, submitting yourself wholly unto His will, it shall turn to your profit, and help you forward in the right way that leadeth unto everlasting life.

Take therefore in good part the chastisement of the Lord; for as the Apostle saith, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son

whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. These words, good *brother,* are written in holy Scripture for our comfort and instruction; that we should patiently, and with thanksgiving, bear our heavenly Father's correction, whensoever by any manner of adversity it shall please His gracious goodness to visit us. And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For he himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain; he entered not into his glory before he was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy, is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ; that we may rise again from death, and dwell with him in everlasting life.

Scripture Consolations.

Hear what the pious Psalmist sung; "I am like a broken vessel; but I trusted in Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in Thy hand; make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me for Thy mercy's sake." "Will the Lord cast me off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy entirely gone for ever? Doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right-hand of the Most High." "The good man will the Lord strengthen on the bed of languishing; Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "I love the Lord, because He hath heard the voice of my supplication. The sorrows of death compassed me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and He helped me. Return to Thy rest, O my soul; the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For Thou hast delivered my

soul from death, mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling." Listen, further, to the prophet Samuel; "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good in His eyes." And to the prophet Isaiah; "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness, will I have mercy on thee." And to the writer of wise proverbs; "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth; even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth." And to the Book of Job; "He maketh sore, and bindeth up; He woundeth, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven, there shall no evil touch thee."

And the Apostle Paul says, "There was given unto me a thorn in the flesh to buffet me. For this thing, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me; and He said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then am I strong." And the Apostle James says, "My brethren, count it all joy, when

ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews says; Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them, who are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands, which hang down, and the feeble knees." And the Apostle John says; "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him, as He is." And the Apostle Peter; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more

precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

Give heed, above all, in thy affliction, to the words of Jesus himself; "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." *

* I have also noted the following, as some of the passages, which will be felt to be particularly appropriate: Exod. xxiii. 25; Deut. xxxi. 8; Joshua i. 9; Psalms

PRAYERS.

"Is any afflicted? let him pray."—James v. 13.

"Prayer best prepares us for the mercies of recovery and the mercies of the grave."—*J. Taylor.*

Prayer, at all times a delightful and soul-elevating duty, is especially congenial to our feelings in the hour of distress and tribulation; wherefore our Divine Master, whenever he had a great temptation to overcome, a difficult task to accomplish or a severe suffering to undergo, betook himself to a solitary place, and, pouring forth his soul, sought strength and comfort in solemn, fervent communion with God. Come, then, ye who are bowed down with a sense of your weakness and frailty, now that ye realize the assurance

xxv. 16—18; xxvii. 1, 5, 7—9, 13, 14; xxviii. 7; xxx. 5; xxxiv. 18; xli. 3; xlii. 5; xlvi. 1, 2, 3; lv. 22; lxix. 29; lxxi. 9; lxxxvi. 1—7, 15—17; lxxxviii. 1, 2, 3, 9—14; xci.; cix. 21—23; cxvi. 12—14; cxix. 75, 76; cxxx. 2—5; cxxxviii. 7; cxxxix. 23, 24; cxlvii. 3; Isaiah xii. 2; xxxv. 3, 4, 10; xliii. 1—3; Matt. ix. 18, 19, 23—26; Luke vii. 11, 15; xv. 11—end; John xi. 1—45; xii. 24—32; xiv.; xvi.; xvii.; xviii. 1—11; Ep. to Romans, ii. 6—11; v. 3, 5, 8; viii. 18, 28; x. 13; xiv. 7—9; 2 Cor. i. 3—5; iv. 7—18; Ephes. iii. 12—21; Col. iii. 2; Heb. x. 36; xi. 13, 16; xii. 5—11; Rev. iii. 19.

that ye are fearfully as well as wonderfully made, come and rise above earth and earthly things, by placing your dependence and fixing your hopes on Him who cannot fail; come and lift up your hearts to your tender, heavenly Father.

PRAYERS TO BE USED BY A SICK PERSON.

I.

Our Father in Heaven, look down with mercy and pity upon Thy servant, and lay not Thy chastening hand upon me more heavily than I can bear. Let me acknowledge with submission and humility, that even in judgment Thou art merciful, and that of very faithfulness Thou hast caused me to be troubled. Thou dost afflict me with a parent's wisdom; O, sustain me with a parent's love. Let Thy grace be sufficient for me in all my need, and let the holy influences of Thy spirit hold me up in my weakness, and inspire my heart with strength, and hope, and confidence. Let not any pain or suffering, however acute, discompose the order of my thoughts, my submission, my gratitude, or my duty. Together with trials wilt Thou provide a way of escape, even by the mercies of a longer and holier life, or by the mercies of a peaceful and blessed death—even as it pleaseth Thee, O Lord.

Thou knowest all the necessities and all the infirmities of Thy servant; fortify my soul, I beseech Thee, with spiritual joys, and perfect resignation, and fill me with desires of holiness and of Thy heavenly Kingdom. Make my repentance entire, and my faith strong, and my hope steadfast, so that if Thou dost please to continue me yet longer in life, I may serve Thee with a devoted heart, and whenever Thou shalt call my spirit away from earth, it may enter into the rest of the sons of God, and be with Thee and the holy Jesus, and the spirits of the just made perfect, for ever and ever. O Lord, hear; O Lord, be merciful; O Lord, heal, and pity, and save. Bless all my friends, and reward all the kindness which is shewn me. Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive those who trespass against me. Be with me every moment; be with me in the hour of death, and O! in the day of judgment, deliver me through Thine infinite mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

II.

Holy Father! who didst sustain and strengthen Thy Son Jesus in the hour of anguish, and who hast taught us to call to Thee out of the depths of our affliction; look down mercifully upon Thy

child now before Thee. My heart is exceeding sorrowful, and I would seek relief in Thy presence. Grant, if it be good in Thy sight, that my health may be once more restored to me, and that I may again go forth amidst Thy beautiful creation, and resume my various social duties, and return to my place in the family circle. Yet, since we are assured that it is out of the fulness of Thy fatherly love that Thou sendest us sickness as well as health, and that it is by trials and sorrows that we are to be fitted for Thine eternal kingdom, I would be still more desirous that I may not be unreasonably anxious as to what lies before me, but may make it my first and most fervent prayer, that my heart and soul may be conformed to Thy will. O, my Father, make me Thine, wholly Thine; what Thou willest, when Thou willest, and how Thou willest; to Thee would I commit myself with the most unreserved confidence. Leaning on Thine Almighty arm, I shall have strength and patience equal to my pain and troubles; and looking to Thee for support and guidance, I shall have even death's dark valley illumined by the light of Thy countenance. I would earnestly pray, Thou greatest and best of Beings! that shouldst Thou be pleased once more to restore me, the fruit of this present dispensation may appear

in a purer, a more pious, thoughtful and industrious life; and should I leave the world and return to Thee, that Thou wilt sustain my drooping spirit, lead me to the grave with Thy fatherly tenderness, and finally unite me with my dearest friends, with Jesus and with the whole church of the first-born at Thy right hand for evermore. Amen.

III.

Gracious Lord! infinite in goodness! of whose love not only the prosperity of Thy chosen people, but even also their afflictions are proofs, grant that I may not, in the low estate to which I am reduced, misinterpret Thy righteous dispensations. May I prove the sincerity of the principles, with which Thou hast blessed me, by acknowledging Thee to be my Father and my God in whatsoever condition I am placed; by bearing witness that no variation in my state is accompanied by any in Thine; that while I am ever changing, Thou remainest for ever the same; and that Thou art no less the sovereign and gracious Disposer of my being when Thou chastenest me, than when Thou surroundest me with every comfort and indulgence.

I praise Thee, O my God, that in reducing me to my present condition of infirmity and weakness,

Thou hast anticipated to me the solemn hour, when all my evil attachments shall be at an end and when I shall be separated from worldly cares. I feel that, till now, I have not fully realized the duty and blessedness of doing Thy holy will, as above all other things. Thou hast said "Blessed are those that weep, and woe unto those, who have now their consolation." But I have said "Woe unto those that mourn and thrice happy the prosperous,"—I have said, "Happy they who are possessed of affluent fortune, high reputation, robust health." But in my incapacity for external joys, may my spirit be purified and brought into accordance with Thine. Come Thou and dwell within me. Nothing short of Thee can fulfil my desires. Open to Thyself, O Lord, my heart. Enable me to revolve, in my silent meditations, Thy merciful decrees, and henceforth may I make it my chief prayer that Thou wilt so dispose of my sickness or my health, as may most conduce to Thy honor, and to the accomplishment of Thy sacred will. Though, however, I ask not exemption from sorrow,—which is the lot of the saints in light, I yet ask that I may not be left to the sorrows of nature without the consolations of Thy spirit; and though I ask not for plenitude of good things without alloy of suffering, for that

is the life of glory,—I yet pray that I may not suffer Thy chastisements without comfort, but may experience chastisements and comfort together, and that in due time the afflictions may be removed, and my joys only remain. But in all things I would commit myself into Thy hands. Thou alone knowest what is best for me—and do Thou grant that with a humble and perfect submission, and in entire confidence and with heartfelt adoration I may receive all the allotments of Thy divine Providence, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IV.

O Lord and heavenly Father, I come before Thee with my humble thanks for all Thy mercies towards me, more especially for the means of grace which Thou hast afforded me in this interruption to my usual course of health. I thank Thee for thus reminding me that my enjoyment of the blessings of this world will not last for ever,—that the things in which I commonly take delight will one day cease to please me. I thank Thee that by calling me off for a little while from my common employments and amusements, Thou givest me time to think how I am passing my life, and what those joys are, which, if I once learn to know

them, will abide with me for ever. Lord, deliver me from all impatience and from all fear for my body, and fill me at the same time with spiritual fear; let me not be afraid of pain or sickness, but let me be afraid of Thee, and not waste the opportunity which Thou art now affording me. Give me grace to think, under the visitations of light sickness, whether I am fit to be visited with dangerous sickness; let me consider what I should do, if, while my body were weakened, my mind should be clouded also, so that I could not then pray to Thee for succour. Now, therefore, O Lord, teach me to call on Thee while I can call on Thee, to think on Thee while my reason is yet in its vigour. Teach me to look into my heart and life, to consider how Thou wouldest judge me, to ask Thy forgiveness through Thy son, Jesus Christ, for all that Thou seest amiss in me, and by the help of Thy holy Spirit to overcome all that is evil in my heart, and to learn and practise all that is good. Restore me in Thy good time to my usual health, and grant that this interruption to it may be sanctified to my soul's health, so making it not an evil to me, but an infinite blessing, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

V.

Spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and am seen no more. Grant that I may never sleep in sin or death eternal, but that I may have my part in the first resurrection, and that the second death may not prevail over me. Grant unto all sick and dying Christians, mercy and aids from Heaven, and receive the souls returning unto Thee, and number them among the righteous. Grant both to them and me to have faith in the Lord Jesus, a daily meditation of death, a contempt of worldly mindedness, a longing desire after Heaven, patience in our sorrows, comfort in our sicknesses, joy in God, a holy life, and a blessed and peaceful departure; that our souls may rest in hope, and may be raised again the last day, to enter into the communion of saints and everlasting life. Amen.

VI.

O Almighty God! merciful and gracious, who dost make Thy justice to minister to mercy, and short afflictions to an eternal weight of glory. Thou hast now called me to the fellowship of sufferings. O Lord, by the instrument of religion, let my present condition be so sanctified,

that my sufferings may be united to the sufferings of my Lord, that so Thou mayst pity and assist me. Relieve my sorrow, and support my spirit: direct my thoughts, and sanctify the circumstances of this my sickness, so that my affliction may be to me the school of virtue. May I behave myself as a son under discipline, humbly and obediently, evenly and penitently, that I may come by this means nearer unto Thee: that if I shall go forth of this sickness, by the gate of life and health, I may return to the world with a greater strength of spirit, to run a new race of stricter holiness, and a purer religion: or if I pass hence by the outlet of death, I may enter into the joy of my Lord, and may now have the certain hope of that sea of pleasures, in which all Thy saints and servants shall be comprehended to eternal ages. Grant this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

UNDER LONG-CONTINUED ILL HEALTH.

Almighty and most merciful Father, in whose hands my breath is, and whose are all my ways! it has pleased Thee, in Thy wisdom, to afflict me with sickness; and to appoint unto me wearisome and restless nights and days of languor, weakness, and pain. Unto Thee, who bringest us low and

raisest us up, I desire to refer myself entirely, and to leave with Thee all my hopes and fears. If it be possible, according to Thy wise and unerring counsels, let this cup of sickness pass from me, but, in all circumstances, enable me to profess sincere resignation to Thy will. In the multitude of Thy mercies, lay no more upon me than Thou wilt enable me to bear. May I derive support and comfort, suitable to the nature and continuance of my trials, from a persuasion that "Thou knowest our frame, and rememberest that we are dust."

O Father of mercies! as a father pitieth his children, look with pity, in the season of my afflictions and sufferings, on me, Thy weak and frail creature. If Thou seest fit that my trouble should continue, give me patience and fortitude of mind to sustain, without murmuring, my pain and infirmities. Though Thou shouldst bring me to the grave, enable me to preserve my trust in Thee. Continually supply me with devout and holy thoughts, and give me a consolatory and thankful sense of Thy goodness and compassion, in administering to me the means of alleviating my maladies, affording to me the tender offices of kind and sympathizing friends, and supporting me on the couch of languor and in the hour of pain.

May faith and patience have their perfect work in me. May I be able to preserve meekness and gentleness of deportment to all around me; may I be effectually assisted to guard against all irritability of temper and peevishness of behaviour; and may I study to return all the ministrations of love and kindness, with thankfulness and affection. And may I, in every respect, study to make my present affliction work in me the peaceable fruits of righteousness. May faith in Thy providence, O my God, as righteous and wise, may the testimony of a good conscience, may the consolations of the Gospel, may the hope of the forgiveness of my sins from Thy mercies in Jesus Christ, may the invigorating power of many great and precious promises, cheer and strengthen my heart, and lift me above all depressing influences.

Assist me, O eternal God, to raise my views and desires to that world, where there will be no more sickness, pain or death, no more sorrow, temptation or sin. Though I should never again recover my health and strength, still may Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me, still may I look peacefully forward to that glorious morning of the resurrection, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, and

I shall be made a partaker of celestial health and vigour. Hear me, O God of my salvation, in these my prayers, for Thy mercy's sake, in Jesus Christ. Amen.

IN SEVERE ILLNESS.

Great and good God, who readest our inmost hearts! Thou knowest how much need Thy servant has of Thy gracious aid in this hour of grief and pain. I am frail, I am weary; soon may I no longer be numbered among the dwellers on earth; to whom shall I look but unto Thee? Thou canst make me strong in faith; Thou canst raise me above all my troubles; Thou canst lift me up to Thyself in Heaven. O Father Almighty, O holy and merciful Father! look down upon Thy child with pity, wipe away my tears, enable me henceforth to bear all my sufferings resignedly and cheerfully, and grant me a happy issue out of my trials. All I ask in the name and as a disciple of Thy dear Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

A PRAYER TO GOD TO HALLOW ALL HIS APPOINTMENTS.

Most merciful God and Father! who hast relieved me hitherto in my sorrows and distresses,

hear me now, I most humbly beseech Thee. Thou seest my present anxious and uncertain state of mind, in relation to my health: O make me indifferent to it; teach me to say with sincerity and cheerfulness, "Thy will be done." Let no secret hopes or wishes after this life, and the enjoyments of it, corrupt my heart, or retard my preparation for a better. Whether I be in sickness or in health, let my conversation be in Heaven; let me earnestly aspire after the duties and joys of Thy everlasting kingdom, and seek the righteousness of it with my whole heart. Thou, O God, knowest all my wants and wilt supply them. Let my present afflictions, let these thoughts and prayers, with which Thou hast now inspired me, awaken me from my deadly sleep, and free me from the slavery of my sins; so that if I should once more be restored to ease and health, my life may become one continued act of love and gratitude to Thee, of good-will to others, and of government over myself, of faith, hope and charity. If otherwise, to Thy mercy I commit myself. Support me under the pains and fears, which attend the removal into another state. Forgive, not only the follies and indiscretions of my youth, but those greater crimes of pride, ambition, neglect of religion, and the

abuse of my time, health, fortunes and other talents committed to my charge, which have most tended to embitter my reflection on death; and graciously receive me into that new world, in which there is neither death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. To Thy mercy, I commit also whatever is dear to me, (my wife, my children,) and all my friends. Make them all to see the importance of a holy life; sanctify both prosperity and adversity to them, and so conduct them through things temporal, that they finally lose not the things eternal. Hear me, O Thou who makest all things to work together for good to them that love Thee, through my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

AN ACT OF RESIGNATION.

O Eternal God, Thou hast made me and sustained me, Thou hast blessed me all the days of my life, and under great variety of accidents Thou hast cared for me: nothing happens to me in vain: nothing without Thy Providence; and I know Thou smitest Thy servants in mercy; and therefore unto Thee I commit myself, my soul and body, and every other thing Thou givest me leave to call my own. Keep me safe by Thy grace, and then use what instrument Thy wisdom shall think most proper to bring me unto Thee. Lord,

I am not solicitous of the way that may lead unto Thyself. Only, remember mine infirmity, and let Thy servant rejoice in Thee always, feel, confess, and glory in Thy goodness. Be Thou equally my delight in my sickness, as formerly in the dangers of my prosperity. Let me not refuse a pardon tendered in a severe discipline; but readily comply with Thy gracious purposes, cover mine eyes, and wait in silence for the time of my redemption, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ANOTHER.

O compassionate Father, I would render unto Thee most humble thanks for that wonderful gradation of mercies shown to me in Thy Son. In him Thou dost offer me Thy holy Spirit, and with it the whole golden mine of all spiritual comfort and good; allowing me, when wearied by the follies and miseries of the world, to refresh my soul in Thee; yea, enjoining it upon me to speak my mind to Thee freely, as the kindest and tenderest of all Fathers, with the sure confidence that, as Thou art withal the Lord of Heaven and earth, so Thou wilt make all different lines always to concentre in my highest good, how opposite soever in appearance now. I do humbly confess my great need of afflictions,

yea, of many afflictions. Keep me, therefore, I pray Thee, from ever promising myself an exemption, although my present state be ever so free from them; and for the number and weight of them, let me resign that altogether into Thy hands, who art my wise Father and Physician, who knowest my mould and maladies, and what kind of chastisement is needful for my cure. But, merciful Father, let me never so wrong myself, as to entertain any care at all, but such as I may put into Thy hands, and make Thine on my behalf. May I have grace to give up all outward things into Thy hands, referring the disposal of them to Thee, and that heartily and fully! Even in the darkest night of sorrow, may I cast anchor in Thee, and repose on Thee when I see no light; remembering that this is not my hope, nor the place of my rest, but the place of my trial and conflict, and that my home is above. Good Lord and Father, of Thine infinite mercy Thou hast called me to eternal glory; save me, then, I pray Thee, from ever being so ungrateful as to repine against Thee, and so to drown a hundred great blessings in any little trouble that befals me. Give me more deep thoughts of the things of the world to come; lift my eyes to that state to which I am

most nearly related; direct my steps to it, and lead me towards it, cheerful and unwearied, by an assured hope that the joyful day will at length come, when, as Christ's disciple, I shall be admitted into the fullest light. Amen.

ANOTHER.

O Lord, Thy care of me is greater than all the anxiety I can bestow on myself.

He standeth but very totteringly, who casteth not all his anxiety upon Thee.

O Lord, if only my will may remain right and firm towards Thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please Thee.

For it cannot be anything but good, whatsoever Thou shalt do with me.

If it be Thy will I should be in darkness, be Thou blessed; and if it be Thy will I should be in light, be Thou again blessed. If Thou vouchsafe to comfort me, be Thou blessed; and if Thou wilt have me afflicted, be Thou ever equally blessed. Amen.

ANOTHER.

Give me grace, O merciful Father, to put the rudder of my life into Thy hands, to steer the course of it as seemeth to Thee good; for, believing that

Thou lovest me, and believing withal that Thou art wiser than I am, I needs must confess, that whatsoever Thou doest with me is better than my own choosing for myself would be: and by all the troubles and unhappiness of this life, enable me to gain this, that when they most abound upon me, I may feel myself a stranger, and behave as such; and think, thereupon, with more delight and stronger desires on my own country, and the rich and sure inheritance that lies there, and the ease and rest I shall have when I come thither. O, happy indeed, good Lord, are the stones Thou choosest to be living stones in Thy spiritual temple, though they be hewed, and hammered, and polished for it by trials and afflictions. How much happier to be the meanest expectant of the glory to come, than the sole possessor of all the world! May my soul have a continual desire to go to that company which is above; to the spirits of just men made perfect, to the company of angels, but most of all to Thee, O God, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament! In that excellent country, Thou hast told me, O Father, that there is light and love, and nothing else; that Thy saints will there be happy for ever; that they shall die no more, shall sorrow no more, shall doubt no more. How cheerfully, then, may

a Christian go through all the sorrows and adversities of this transitory life! To Thee, O blessed Lord, I commend and commit myself, both for time and eternity, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ANOTHER.

O Lord, Thou knowest what is best for us, let all things be done according to Thy pleasure. Give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt. Deal with me, as Thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth Thee, and is most for Thine honor. Set me where Thou wilt, and do with me in all things just as Thou wilt. I am in Thy hands, willing to go anywhither at Thy bidding. Behold, I am Thy servant, prepared for all things; for I desire to live—not to myself, but unto Thee; and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly! Amen.

FOR A SEASON OF RESTLESSNESS.

Gracious God, who art able to make and dost make the sick bed of Thy servants a chapel of ease to them, and convertest their dreams into prayers and meditations upon Thy own glorious perfections, let not this continual watchfulness of mine, this inability to sleep, which Thou hast laid upon me,

be any disquiet or discomfort to my soul, but hallow these hours by holy thoughts, and by the precious peace of Christ, and by sweet anticipations of the eternal rest, which Thou hast promised to the faithful. Amen.

A HOLY RESOLUTION OF AMENDMENT IN CASE OF RECOVERY.

O most just and merciful Lord God, who hast sent diseases, sorrow and fear into the world, and planted briars and thorns in our houses and round about our dwellings, to keep sin from our souls or drive it thence, I humbly beg of Thee that this my sickness may serve Thy gracious ends, and be a messenger of spiritual life, an instrument of reducing me to more religious and sober courses. I know, O Lord, that I am unready to pass on, unprepared in my accounts, having wasted great portions of my time in vanity: and I had need live my life over again, and live it better; but Thy counsels are in the great deep, and Thy footsteps in the waters, and I know not what Thou wilt determine concerning me. If I die, I throw myself wholly into the arms of Thy mercy through Jesus Christ; but if I recover, I will live by Thy grace and help to do the work of God, and passionately pursue my interest of Heaven, and serve Thee in

the labours of love, with the charities of a holy zeal, and the diligence of a firm and humble obedience. Religion shall be my employment, and patience shall be my seat, and to do Thy will shall be my meat and my drink. To live shall be Christ, and then to die will be gain. O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen. Amen.

TO BE USED BY A DYING PERSON.

O God of love and mercy, to Thee do I now commit all my dear relations and friends. I unreservedly and trustfully resign them to Thy gracious care and protection. Thou who art the Father of the fatherless, and pleadest the cause of the widow, forsake not those whom Thou hast entrusted especially to my charge, but provide for them according to the riches of Thy bounty, and defend them with Thine almighty arm. Be Thou to them when I am gone, all that I should desire to be, and infinitely more than I could be, if I were permitted still to remain with them below. Enable them at all times to make Thee their great source of hope and joy. Keep them from those pollutions which might make them forfeit Thy favours, and would cry louder against them than my destruction of outward lot. Train

them up in Thy fear, preserve them from the evils and temptations of the world, and bring them at last to the joys and blessedness of Thy heavenly kingdom. Now, Lord, lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace. Into Thy hands I commend my spirit. O forgive and strengthen me; guide me through the valley of the shadow of death, and let me dwell henceforth in Thy glorious presence with my blessed Saviour, with those whom I love and with all Thy saints for ever and ever. Amen.

ON RECOVERING FROM SEVERE SICKNESS.

'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; and who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercy.' I thank Thee, O God, for every comfort, and every alleviation of pain, with which Thou hast been pleased to furnish me; and especially for the love of my friends, and the promises of Thy gospel. I acknowledge Thine inexpressible goodness in restoring me from the brink of the grave, and from the anguish of suffering, to endeared connections, to enlivened hopes, to new opportunities, and to increased motives for cultivating Christian

affections, for abounding in good works, and for laying up treasure in Heaven.

O Father! let not these opportunities be neglected by me; but may they be wisely improved to Thy glory. I have experienced Thy power and compassion: may I ever live in the exercise of a grateful confidence in Thee; and be duly sensible of my total dependence on Thy providence and government. I have been brought near to the realities of the world to come; brought to feel the worth of Thy favour, and the value of a conscience void of offence. Almighty God! let the lessons of my experience sink deeply into my heart. Enable me at all times to entertain that humble contrition for my sins, and that penitential sense of my need of Thy mercy, which the nearness of death was instrumental in producing. Help me to appreciate, as I ought, eternal things, and to do all that Thou requirest, in order that I may secure Thine approbation and friendship. May the resolutions I formed in the time of sickness, now be effectual to my growth in grace, and more unreserved obedience. Thou hast enabled me to realize the vanity and uncertainty of the world; preserve me from attaching too much importance to its pleasures, honors, or possessions;

and assist me constantly to remember how rapidly it is passing away.

Thou hast made me sensibly feel the worth of friendship; and the services of skill and kindness, which have been performed for me, have, with Thy blessing, cheered, supported, and restored me. My God! never let me be insensible of the love of those whose hearts Thou hast warmed with good-will towards me. Make me ready to return their benevolence on every occasion. Let me be softened with humanity towards all that suffer; and let me never behold the bed of sickness, without sympathy and charity.

It was Thy Gospel, O Thou God of all consolation in Jesus Christ, from which my chief hope was derived, when the shadows of death appeared to encompass me. O give me grace to cling, with faster hold than ever, to this rock of salvation, and to abide in Thy love.

Preserver of my being! Thou hast now only shown me how frail I am, I know that ere long I shall bid farewell to all whom I now behold. Oh may I be prepared for that sickness, from which I shall not recover. May I walk by faith and not by sight. May I be concerned to be always ready, and to be found in that frame of

mind which will enable me to welcome death as the messenger of peace. Amen.

AFTER RECOVERY.

Most gracious and merciful God, to whom alone belong the issues of life and death, I Thy unworthy servant, who have been under Thine afflicting hand, and am raised again from the bed of sickness, do here present myself before Thee, in a thankful sense of Thy great mercy and goodness towards me. Blessed be Thy holy name for supporting me under the pain and anguish of my sickness, for the seasonable supplies of patience and comfort, which Thou didst graciously afford me, and for restoring me in Thy good time to the blessings of health and strength.

I adore the riches of Thy goodness in giving me a right knowledge of Thee and Thy ways in these Thy dispensations to me, and in making them the happy means of bringing me to a sense of the evil of my doings, and to a serious consideration of my future state. To Thee, O my God, who hast not cut me off in the midst of my sins, but hast in great mercy given me space for repentance and amendment; to Thee will I live in holiness and righteousness all my days, forsaking every evil way, and studying above all

things to do that, which is well-pleasing in Thy sight. And in a sense of my own weakness and frailty, I earnestly implore the assistance of Thy holy Spirit, to subdue my inordinate desires, to break the power of all evil habits, and to keep me steadfast in every promise and resolution, that I made before Thee in the day of my distress; all which I do now, in Thy presence, most sincerely and heartily renew. And, I beseech Thee, let me never be drawn to forget or neglect them, either by the cares and pleasures of this world, or by the hopes of a long continuance in it; but enable me always so to live, that I may be found watching, whenever my appointed time shall come, and may change this frail state of mortality for an immortal crown of glory. All this I humbly beg through Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour. Amen.

PRAYERS TO BE USED BY OTHERS FOR A SICK PERSON.*

I.

O Lord! look down from Heaven, behold, visit, and relieve this Thy servant. Look upon *him* with the eye of mercy; give *him* comfort,

* Some of these prayers may be used *with* as well as *for* a sick person.

and sure confidence in Thee; support *him* under all the trials of *his* present sickness; relieve *his* pains, if it seem good unto Thee; and keep *him* in perpetual peace and safety, through Thy great mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and everliving God, Maker of mankind, who dost correct those whom Thou dost love, and chastise every one whom Thou dost receive: we beseech Thee to have mercy upon this Thy servant visited with Thy hand, and grant that *he* may bear *his* sickness patiently; and fit *him*, O Lord, for whatever in Thy wise and righteous Providence Thou hast appointed for *him*; that *he* may have cause to glorify Thy holy name for *his* present sufferings, and find that Thou, O God, of very faithfulness, hast caused *him* to be troubled. Hear our prayers, O Lord, and grant our requests, for Thy mercy's sake. Amen.

Hear us, almighty and most merciful God and Saviour, and extend Thy accustomed goodness to this Thy servant, who is grieved with sickness. Sanctify, we beseech Thee, this Thy fatherly correction to *him*, that the sense of *his* weakness may add strength to *his* faith, and seriousness to *his* repentance; that if it shall be Thy good pleasure to restore *him* to his former health, *he* may lead the residue of *his* life in Thy fear and to Thy

glory: or else give *him* grace so to take Thy visitation, that after this painful life shall be ended, *he* may dwell with Thee in life everlasting, according to Thy gracious promises by Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee. O Lord, bless *him* and keep *him*. O Lord, make Thy face to shine upon *him*, and be gracious unto *him*. O Lord, lift up the light of Thy countenance upon *him*, and give *him* peace both now and for evermore. Amen.

II.

Gracious God, give Thy servant patience in *his* sorrows, comfort in this *his* sickness; and restore *him* to health, if it seem good to Thee, in order to Thy great and gracious ends, and *his* highest interests. And, however Thou shalt determine concerning *him* in this great trial, yet make *his* repentance perfect, and *his* passage safe, and *his* hope modest and confident; that when Thou shalt call *his* soul from this corruptible body, *he* may enter into the security and rest of the sons of God, in the bosom of everlasting blessedness, and in communion with Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

III.

Do Thou, our most merciful God and Father, who art a present help in time of trouble, and who hast in Thy word particularly encouraged those who are afflicted to pray, have compassion on Thy servant, on whom Thou hast laid Thy afflictive hand. Thou sayest to diseases, Go, and they go, Come, and they come, to answer the wise and gracious purposes of Thy Providence. If it be Thy pleasure, restore Thy servant to health, and afford *him* renewed opportunity of usefulness in life. But, above all, do Thou fit *him* and all of us, who are connected with *him*, for Thy holy will; and whatever be the issue, may our afflictions, which are but for a moment, be a means of working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, by making us look not so much to the things which are seen and temporal, and more to those things which are unseen and eternal. Amen.

FOR A FRIEND DANGEROUSLY ILL.

Father of mercies! from Thee alone cometh all hope. To Thee our inmost souls lie open. Thou hearest the prayers that are springing there, beyond all power of utterance, for our

suffering friend. Thou knowest how ardently we desire that this sickness may not be unto death, that Thy blessing may descend upon the means used for the restoration of Thy servant, and give success to the efforts of human skill. O spare *him*, that he may recover strength. Turn our sorrow into joy. Give unto us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Let Thy servant live and bless Thy name.

But, O God, not our will but Thine, Thy perfect will be done! Be this the prayer of our hearts as well as of our lips. Shed abroad within and all around us the peace of entire submission. May we all, and Thy suffering servant especially, repose unwavering faith in Thee. Being truly penitent for all *his* offences, may *he* hear a voice from Heaven whispering hope. Give *him* the assurance of Thine everlasting mercy. Encompass and sustain *his* spirit in the hour of darkness with thoughts of Heaven. Enable us all to rise far above the clouds of this mortal state, to sit in heavenly places with him who was made perfect through sufferings, and where Thou art revealed working in all things to produce boundless and everlasting good. Let not the monitory voices of life and death fall upon heedless ears. May we gird on the armour of righteousness, and

so be prepared to part with the near and the dear, and to follow them at Thy bidding, supported by that faith in Thy blessed Son, which takes the sting from death, and despoils the grave of its victory.

Be with us, heavenly Father, in all temptations. May every fear be still, every murmur hushed, every heart exalted into holy communion with Thee. And whether our blessings remain or depart, let our faith in God abide, and by all events, whether joyous or sorrowful, may we grow in this saving grace, and to Thee shall be the glory! Amen.

ANOTHER.

O Lord, our heavenly Father! our refuge in times of danger, our help in every distress. Hear our prayer, we beseech Thee, for Thy servant, who is now dangerously sick. If it please Thee, direct us to the use of those means, which by Thy blessing shall be made effectual in restoring *him* to health. Enable us to perform all our duties to *him*, sensible of our dependence on Thee, and trusting in Thy providence. Give *him* patience under all *his* pains, and help *him* to bear *his* trials with a filial submission to Thy will. Shouldst Thou appoint unto *him* many

wearisome days and nights, may Thy grace be sufficient for *him*. If it please Thee, let not *his* sickness be unto death. But whether it be unto death or not, may it be to Thy glory, and to *his* spiritual and eternal good. Whatever may be the event, may we be enabled to say from the heart, Father, not my will, but Thine, be done.

We plead for the health of *his* body; but more earnestly for the health of *his* soul. Give *him* divine light and strength, that inward peace which the world cannot give. Pardon all *his* sins, and inspire *him* with a living faith, and a holy and heavenly hope. May Thy love be shed abroad in *his* heart; surround *him* with Thy care and presence; and dispose *him* to commend *his* body and soul to Thy hands.

If *he* be permitted to live, may *his* life be devoted to Thee; if *he* be soon to die, may *he* die in the Lord, and may death be *his* gain.

O graciously prepare *him*, and prepare us for all the events of Thy providence; and for every scene whether of joy, or of sorrow, through which we may be called to pass. May we be resigned and conformed to Thy will; and may we so love, believe in, and serve Thee, and Thy Son, that we shall find support and comfort in all our troubles, and when we are called away from earth, be

admitted into the unceasing joys of Heaven; through the riches of Thy grace in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR A SICK PERSON, WHEN THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF RECOVERY.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need, we flee unto Thee for succour in behalf of Thy servant now lying before Thee in great weakness of body: look graciously upon *him*, O Lord; and as the outward man decayeth, strengthen *him*, we beseech Thee, so much the more, by Thy power, in the inward man. Uphold *him* continually by the aid of Thy good Spirit, and comfort *him* by the powerful consolations of Thy holy Word. Give *him* unfeigned repentance for all the errors of *his* life past, and a firm reliance on Thy great mercies promised by Jesus Christ our Lord, that *his* sins may be forgiven, ere *he* go hence and be no more seen. We know, O Lord, that there is no work impossible with Thee, and that, if Thou willest, Thou canst yet raise *him* up, and grant *him* a longer continuance amongst us. Yet, forasmuch as to all appearance the time of *his* dissolution draweth near, so fit and prepare *him*, we beseech

Thee, for the hour of death, that after *his* departure hence in peace, and in Thy favour, *he* may, in Thine appointed time, be received into Thine everlasting kingdom. And teach us, O God, in this, and other like instances, to see how frail and uncertain our own condition is, and so to number our days, that we may, while we live here, seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom, which will in the end bring us to life everlasting, according to Thy gracious promises by Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, to Thy Divine Majesty, be everlasting praises. Amen.

FOR A SICK CHILD.

Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to pity the troubles of the child whom Thou hast visited with illness, and pity our sorrows, who are afflicted for it. Ease it of its pains, and strengthen it in its weakness. Raise it up again, if it shall please Thee, to grow in years and stature, in wisdom and virtue; and thereby to comfort us, and glorify Thee. We believe that Thou knowest what is fit both for it, and for us, and wilt do what is best; and therefore we leave it to Thy wise disposal. But let it be Thine, O Lord, in life or death; and either preserve it to be Thy true and faithful servant on earth, or take it to the

blessedness of Thy children in the kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

PARENTS' PRAYER FOR A SICK CHILD.

O Father in Heaven! Hear the prayer of earthly parents for their child. Thou knowest how dear *he* is to us, and Thou wilt forgive our urgency, when we beseech Thee to alleviate *his* sufferings, to spare the fond hopes, which have clustered around *him*, and to permit *him* still to remain with us a light and a joy of our dwelling. But, O holy Father, yet more earnestly would we implore Thee for that strength, which will enable us to become faithful and confiding children to Thee. If Thou shouldst remove from us our sweet spirit, Thou wilt take *him* to Thyself, and cause *him* to be nurtured by angels; and, though *he* return not to us, we shall soon pass on to *him*. We would therefore desire only to place both *him* and ourselves in Thy hands—in Thy hands, O Father. And if Thou shouldst entrust *him* longer to us, may we always remember that *his* and our home is with Thee, and may we show how much we treasure *him* and how grateful we are to Thee, by a diligent and thoughtful use of those means, whereby we may render *him* more fit for Thy blessed presence. Amen.

FOR ONE WHO IS DERANGED IN MIND.

Almighty God, whose wisdom is infinite, whose mercy is everlasting, be pleased to hear our prayers for Thy servant who needs but cannot ask, who is in misery but feels it not, who acts without choice, and chooses without discretion. Pity the evil which *he* suffers, and impute not to *him* the follies which *he* rather bears than commits. If it please Thee, restore to *him his* health and understanding, take from *him* all violent passions, and remove all evil objects far from *his* eyes. Create in *him* a clean heart, and renew a right mind within *him*.—Or, if *he* may not glorify Thee by a free and rational obedience, do Thou glorify Thyself by Thy free mercies towards *him*. Let *him* be safe under Thy providence and innocent under the guidance of Thy Spirit; and let *his* destitution of good in this world, be followed by abundant blessings in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER IN CASE OF SUDDEN EXTREMITY.

O most gracious Father, Judge of the living and the dead, behold Thy servants hastening to Thee for pity and mercy in behalf of this Thy servant, whom Thou hast thus suddenly smitten.

If it be Thy will, spare *him* a little, that *he* may recover *his* strength before *he* goes hence and is seen no more. But, if Thou hast otherwise appointed, let the miracles of Thy compassion and Thy wonderful mercy supply to *him* the want of the usual measures of time, and the periods of repentance, and the trimming of *his* lamp. O Thou, who regardest the heart and the measures of the mind more than the delay and the measures of time, let it be Thy pleasure to rescue the soul of Thy servant from all the evils *he* hath deserved, and all the evils *he* fears. Stir up in *him* such effectual contrition for sin and fervent love of Thee, as may make *him* to be accepted with Thee, so that *his* voice may be heard in the blessed songs of Thy saints and holy angels, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR A SICK PERSON WHEN THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF RECOVERY.

We thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that Thou hast heard our prayers for Thine afflicted servant, and given *him* some respite and hopes of recovery from *his* illness. Blessed be Thy goodness, that *he* is likely to continue still amongst us in the land of the living. And, O Thou Preserver of man! who hast begun to re-

vive and quicken *him* again, go on to perfect *his* cure, and visit *him*, in the meantime, with Thy heavenly consolation from above. Fill *him* with comfortable thoughts of Thy love, and of the tender compassionate care which our Lord Jesus promises to all Thy afflicted servants. Endue *him* still with more patient submission, and enable *him* both quietly to wait upon Thee, till Thou hast finished *his* recovery, and also to continue steadfastly resolved to serve Thee more faithfully with *his* renewed strength; through Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour. Amen.

THANKSGIVING IN THE PROSPECT OF RECOVERY.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, we give Thee our humble and hearty thanks for Thy goodness shown to Thy servant whom Thou hast been pleased to visit with sickness. We thank Thee for the prospect, which Thou hast given *him*, of recovery of *his* full health and strength, as well as for the present abatement of *his* disorder. Grant that Thy mercies may be felt by *him* and by us; that they may not lead us to tempt Thy long-suffering by continued hardness of heart, but may make us desirous of showing our gratitude to Thee by living according to Thy will. May we remember

how nearly health and sickness come together, and that the time will surely come to us all when we shall be raised up from sickness no more.

While Thou yet sparest us, give us grace to turn to Thee in earnest that we may not have to turn to Thee when it is too late with a vain regret and despair. Grant this, O Lord, through Thy dear son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILD-BIRTH.

Almighty and ever gracious God! We give unto Thee our heartfelt thanks for Thy great goodness to Thy servant in a season of pain and danger, and that Thou hast made her the mother of a living child. May the life which Thou hast preserved and that which Thou hast bestowed be earnestly dedicated to Thy service. Bless the whole family to which they belong. Let all feel that an immortal spirit has been given them to nurture for Heaven. Endue the Parents especially with wisdom and grace, that they may feel their responsibility, and at all times look to Thee for strength and guidance; and, if it be Thy will, grant that they may live so long here together in godly love, that they may see their children brought up in a truly virtuous and Christian manner, and at last together with them be in-

heritors of Thine everlasting Kingdom, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ANOTHER.

Great and merciful God! We give Thee humble thanks for Thy protecting goodness towards Thy servant in a season of peculiar trial. It has pleased Thee to withhold from her offspring the breath of life. May no murmur escape her lips. So it seemed good in Thy sight. Restore her, O Father, speedily to health and strength; and let Thy blessing descend upon her and hers, and dwell in their hearts through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYERS TO BE USED *WITH* THE SICK.*

I.

O Lord, the Father of our spirits, who givest us life, and breath, and all things, and hast not thought a crown of everlasting life too much to promise us; we believe that Thou wilt not deny us what is needful and fit for us, both for our souls and our bodies, in our passage through this world. We more particularly commend this Thy sick servant to Thy infinite and most compas-

* Vide also some of the Prayers to be used by others *for* the sick.

sionate mercy. Settle in *his* soul a steadfast faith, that Thou dost not willingly grieve the children of men, but intendest good to *him* by this Thy fatherly correction. And now since all other pleasures and enjoyments fail *him*, represent Thyself more effectually unto *him*, as the only support and stay of *his* hope, and rock of salvation. Wherein soever *he* hath neglected Thee, or committed any offence against Thee, make *him* deeply sensible of it, and heartily sorrowful for all *his* transgressions. And as *he* earnestly desires pardon and forgiveness of Thee, so work in *him* a serious resolution to live more circumspectly and righteously for the time to come. Assist *him* graciously, O Lord, that *he* may give a proof of *his* sincere intentions hereafter to submit *himself* in all things to Thy will, by *his* patient submission to Thy fatherly correction. O that *he* may so quietly, so meekly, so humbly and cheerfully resign *his* will unto Thee, to suffer what Thou inflictest, that *he* may be the more disposed to do readily whatsoever Thou commandest. For which end make *him* thoroughly apprehensive of Thy sovereign power and authority over all creatures. Possess *him* with a great reverence of Thy wisdom and justice, with an entire confidence in Thy goodness and love, with a thankful remembrance

of all Thy past mercies to *him*, that so *he* may the better endure what Thou layest upon *him* at present, and may ever follow Thy directions, and submit to Thy orders, and delight to do Thy will, O God.

Bless the remedies which are used for restoring *him* to *his* former health, that *he* may live to perform *his* duty with greater care; or, if Thou hast otherwise appointed, accept graciously *his* purposes of amendment, and dispose *him* to return *his* spirit willingly unto Thee who gavest it, and with great humility and a deep sense of *his* own undeservings, to expect Thy mercy declared in Christ Jesus. Fix *his* mind steadfastly upon him who led the way through the grave unto Heaven, that *he* may not be affrighted with the approaches of death, but looking beyond it to that high and holy place where the Lord Jesus is, may rejoice in the hope of eternal glory.

And grant that every one of us, in our best state of health, may consider perpetually how frail and weak we are; that so we may not abuse ourselves by an intemperate use of any sensual pleasures, nor load our minds with the cares of this life, nor spend our days in a vain pursuit of the honour and glory of this world; but may pass all the time of our sojourning here in fear;

and may live so righteously and soberly in this present world, as becomes those who expect shortly to give an account to Thee, who wilt judge all men according to their works. Hear us, O Lord, we most humbly beseech Thee, through Christ Jesus our merciful and compassionate Redeemer. Amen.

FOR PEACE AND TRUST IN DEATH.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be near to this Thy servant in the parting moment. Speak peace to *his* soul. Breathe into *his* fainting spirit the refreshings of mercy. Raise *his* thoughts to Thee. Disengage *him* from the world. May *he* know that if *his* earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, *he* has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. Enable *him*, if it be only in sighs, to commend *his* soul into Thy hands.

And when the solemn moment comes that *he* shall be removed hence, may *he* gently fall asleep in Jesus, to awaken in the arms of everlasting love, in that world where the sun shall be no more *his* light by day, nor the moon by night, but where God shall be *his* everlasting light.

Grant unto *him*, and unto us, the pardon of our sins, a humble faith in Jesus Christ our Lord,

and grace to walk in the way of Thy commandments. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR RECOVERY.

Great and mighty God, who bringest down to the grave and raisest again; we bless Thy wonderful goodness, for having turned our heaviness into joy and our mourning into gladness, by restoring this our *brother* to some degree of *his* former health. Blessed be Thy name, that Thou in *his* sickness didst visit *him* with comforts from above; didst support *him* in patience and submission to Thy will, and at last didst send *him* relief. Perfect, we beseech Thee, this Thy mercy towards *him*, and prosper the means which shall be made use of for *his* cure; that being restored to health of body, vigour of mind, and cheerfulness of spirit, *he* may offer Thee a spiritual oblation with great gladness, and bless Thy holy name for all Thy goodness towards *him*, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, through whom we ascribe unto Thee all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER TO BE USED BY A SICK PERSON.

My God and Father! once more do I hear the voice of morning calling me to prayer. I cannot indeed kneel down with my dear brethren at the family altar, as I have been wont in my days of health: but Thou hast assured me that Thou wilt come to my chamber, and favorably regard the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart. In this hour of especial need, O enable me to feel Thy presence; enable me now to feel in my inmost soul what I have frequently acknowledged with my lips, and unfeignedly believed, that Thou art as good to us, as truly our Father, when Thou sendest us severe trials, as when Thou leadest us along a path smooth and strewn with flowers. I would take courage from the unchangeableness of Thy infinite wisdom and love, and would heartily thank and bless Thee for all that Thou ordainest. Since, if I lean confidingly upon Thee and wait patiently, I cannot doubt that I shall in the end see that all has been well, I would say with an ever-increasing devotedness, Father, not my will, but Thine be done. During the day on which I have now entered, I beseech Thee to do for and with me what Thou seest to be best. Relieve my pains and anxieties, so far as it may be good in

Thy sight. But let me not be too full of care as to what may happen to my poor tenement of clay; let me concern myself rather about those things which are unseen and everlasting, and steadfastly live for them as the only true realities. May I remember, that if I cannot go forth into the world to my accustomed active duties, I may yet here in my retirement do what will be equally acceptable to Thee,—I may perform all the duties of religion,—I may be resigned, loving, devout, I may form holy resolutions, and cherish sweet thoughts of Heaven, I may commune deeply with Jesus Christ and grow in his likeness, I may approach nearer and nearer to what Thou wouldst have me become, and thus each day be less unfit for Thy eternal world of angels and blessed spirits. In whatever circumstances I may be placed, may I manifest the spirit of Jesus Christ, the spirit of Thy child. Forgive my past; brighten and hallow my future. If Thou shouldst restore my strength, and I should live on here below, may my life be more thoughtful, pure, and noble; and whensoever I die, whether the time be distant or near, may I sleep in Jesus, and awake at Thy right hand. And now in the words of Thy beloved Son, my Saviour, I would conclude my morning prayer; Our Father, who

art in Heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them, that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER TO BE USED BY A SICK PERSON.

Father in Heaven! The evening is again here, and I would lift up my voice to Thee. I thank Thee for this day. Thou doest us good in various ways. To some Thou hast spread the table of plenty, and allotted the duties and occupations of the world; to me and to others, whom Thou hast bowed down in sorrow, Thou hast sent rich spiritual lessons; but Thou dost more and better for us all than we can ask or conceive; and I would gratefully accept what Thou hast appointed as for me the best blessing. May Thy present teachings come deeply home to my heart, and purify and elevate my character, and render me less unfit for the happier seasons, which Thou hast in store. While, however, I call to Thee at this time out of the depths of affliction, I

would not be unmindful of the unspeakable privileges, comforts and sources of joy, which are still mine. I feel that Thou hast indeed given me songs in the night. Around my bed are constant ministrations of affection. I may read Thy sacred word, and indulge in high and hallowed meditations on things unseen and eternal, and, above all, hold communion with Thee and Thy Son, my blessed Saviour. O Father! I have not been mindful enough of these gracious means and opportunities, but in the low estate to which in Thy wisdom Thou hast brought me, I am solemnly warned to be no longer neglectful of my best, my only abiding interests. Forgive all that I have left undone or done wrong this day and in all the past, and continue to me Thy fatherly care and protection. If it be not well in Thy sight to alleviate my pains and restore me to health, let Thy all-wise and gracious will be done, and do Thou sustain and lift up my spirit, and give me divine consolation. O God, make all my bed in my sickness; and in life and in death may I be truly Thy child. If I have seasons of restlessness during the night, let them be full of filial trust and patience, peaceful and holy thoughts, and bright and happy anticipations. Bless all my dear friends, and reward

them for their thoughtfulness and kindness towards me; bless all mankind, and be especially with those, who are in affliction. At all times, and particularly now that I am so deeply impressed with the transitoriness of earthly things, may my mind and heart frequently ascend to those of the loved and the good, who have left the world, and ascended to Thee, and make me more and more sensible of the blessedness of joining the great spiritual brotherhood of Heaven. Our Father, &c.

MEDITATIONS.

All God's appointments must be wise and good.

In all our afflictions, we ought to seek consolation, not in ourselves or in any created thing, but in God, who is the cause and mover of those events, which the world calls evil. We should repair to the original source for the only solid comfort. If we act upon this principle; if we look on death, for instance,—not as the result of mere chance, not as an inevitable fatality of nature, or the sport of those elements and particles, which constitute our bodily frame, but as the decree of One who is all-wise, all-mighty and perfectly good; if, by a noble transport, we contemplate the occurrence, not by itself, and apart from its Author, but as an act of His holy will, a decree emanating from His infinite goodness, a part of His providential dispensations —we shall adore in humble silence,—reverence and bless Him for His allotments, and uniting

our will to His, we shall choose the very events, which He has appointed for us from the beginning. Let us then cast all our care upon God, committing to Him the whole disposal of our concerns, and cultivating a cheerful acquiescence in all His dealings with us.

God in His Providence ordereth this affliction.

You are persuaded that neither sickness, nor crosses, come by chance to any one.

But you believe, that it is God who sendeth them, without whose providence they fall not on us.

You acknowledge God to be most wise, and to suffer nothing to befall us, but for our good.

Acknowledge, therefore, that this His present visitation is for your benefit.

I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

The Fatherly love of God.

You know and confess, that God beareth the affection of a father towards His children.

You know, also, that a father, whether he dote upon his child, or whether he chasten him, con-

tinueth a father in both cases; and loveth him in the one no less than in the other.

Think the same of God, as touching yourself: that while He gave you good days, He loved you; and that, now He sendeth you some evil, He loveth you still; and would not have sent this evil, but to be a cause unto you of greater good; that, being called home thereby, you might be at peace with Him.

We should trust in God as children.

Lord God, Holy Father, be Thou blessed both now and for evermore, for all that Thou doest is good.

Let Thy servant rejoice in Thee; for Thou alone art the true gladness; Thou art my hope and my crown. If Thou give me peace, if Thou pour into my heart holy joy, then will my soul be full of melody, and I shall become devout in Thy praise.

O righteous Father, the hour is come that Thy servant is to be proved. Meet and right is it that I should suffer something from Thee and for Thee.

Father, the hour is come which from all eternity Thou hast foreknown would come, that

Thy servant should for a time be outwardly brought low, that he may inwardly live with Thee for ever!

For a little while must I be nothing, and I must fail in the sight of men, and I must be worn with suffering and weakness. But it is all that I may rise in the dawn of a new light, and grow glorious in Heaven. Holy Father! so Thou hast ordered it; and what has been done and is being done with regard to me is Thy decree.

God our Help in time of Need.

My son, I am the Lord, that giveth strength in the day of tribulation.

Come thou unto Me, when it is not well with thee. This is what most of all hindereth heavenly consolation, that thou art too slow in turning thyself unto prayer.

For, before thou dost earnestly supplicate Me, thou seekest meanwhile many comforts, and refreshest thyself in outward things.

And hence cometh it to pass, that all doth little profit thee, until thou well consider, that I am He, who do rescue them, that trust in Me; and that out of Me, there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counsels, nor lasting remedy.

But do thou, having now recovered breath after the tempest, gather strength again in the light of My mercies; for I am at hand to repair all, not only entirely, but also abundantly and in most plentiful measure.

Is there anything difficult to Me? or shall I be like one, that promiseth and performeth not?

Where is thy faith? stand firmly and with perseverance; take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time.

He is not truly patient, who is willing to suffer only so much as he himself thinks good.

Wait, wait, I say for Me; I will come and heal thee.

"Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

Oh my God! what is death or life to me? Life is nothing; it is even a snare, if it be too dear to me. Death can only destroy this house of clay; it delivers the soul from the contamination of the body, and from its own pride. It frees it from the influence of the tempter, and introduces it for ever into the kingdom of truth.

I ask not, then, O my Father, for health or

for life. I make an offering to Thee of all my days. Thou hast counted them. I would know nothing more. All I ask is, to die rather than spend my days in evil things; and if it be Thy will that I depart, let me die in patience and love. Almighty God, who holdest the keys of the tomb in Thy hand, to open and close it at Thy will, give me not life if I shall love it too well. Living or dying, I would be Thine.

"In patience possess ye your souls."

When consolation is taken from thee, do not immediately despair, but with humility and patience wait for the heavenly visitation; for God is able to give thee back again more ample consolation.

This is nothing new or strange unto them that have experience in the way of God; for the great saints and ancient prophets had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

I never found any so religious and devout, that he had not sometimes a withdrawing of grace; nor was there ever one so highly rapt and illumined, that first or last he was not tempted.

For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some trial. Trial going before, is wont to be a sign of after-comfort. Unto those, who are tried

and proved, heavenly comfort is promised. He that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

When thou thinkest thyself farthest off from God, oftentimes He is nearest to thee.

When thou judgest that almost all is lost, then oftentimes the greatest gain of reward is close at hand.

All is not lost, when anything falleth out contrary.

Thou shouldst not judge according to present feeling; nor so take any grief, nor give thyself over to it, from whencesoever it cometh, as though all hopes of escape were quite taken away.

Think not thyself wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or even withdrawn thy desired comfort; for this is the way to the kingdom of Heaven.

I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy welfare, that thou be sometimes left alone.

If, therefore, I send thee affliction, or any cross whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee;

I can quickly succour thee and turn all thy heaviness into joy.

If thou bear the cross cheerfully, it will bear thee and lead thee to thy desired haven, viz., where there shall be an end of suffering, though here there shall not.

"It is the Lord, who leads me; I shall want nothing."

How weak it is in us to seek anything but God! While we have the source of all good, we think ourselves poor. We desire to find, even in piety, earthly consolations. We look upon it rather as a softener of the ills that we must endure, than as a state of renunciation and sacrifice of self. From this arise our discouragements. Let us begin by yielding ourselves up to the will of God. When serving Him, let us have no anxiety about what He will do for us. A little more or less suffering in this short life, will be but of little consequence. What can I want, if God is with me, yes, God Himself? He is the infinite and the only good. Vanish, all ye false goods of earth, unworthy of the name you bear, and often only making men wicked. God alone is good, He who ever dwells in my soul. Let

Him deprive me of my pleasures, of riches, honor, power, friends, health, and life, while He does not estrange Himself from my heart, I shall be rich, I shall have lost nothing, I shall have preserved my all.

The Lord has sought me in my wanderings, has loved me when I have not loved Him, has regarded me with compassion, notwithstanding my ingratitude. I am in His hands, I feel my weakness and His strength; with such a support I shall want nothing.

God our strength and our refuge.

Blessed be Thy name, O Lord, for ever. It is Thy will that this trial and sorrow should come upon me. I would flee to Thee, that Thou mayst help me, and turn it to my good.

Troubled am I, O Lord, with my suffering; yet what shall I say? save me from this hour? But to this end came I to this hour, that Thou mayst be glorified, when I shall have been greatly humbled and by Thee delivered.

Let it please Thee, O Lord, to come to my rescue; then will I not fear. Grant me patience, that I may say, "Thy will be done."

My God and my duty.

I cannot conceal from myself, that I am not as I used to be; pain, weakness, restlessness remind me that the days of bodily health and earthly joy are not for ever, and that I may be even now walking down the valley of the shadow of death; and the spirit of sadness takes possession of me, and to labour and to wait are alike to me a burden.

Yet, I know well that, as a Christian, I ought to be cheerful and patient in all circumstances; for everywhere and at all times God is my Father, and everywhere and at all times, when I am helpless on the sick bed and have only to be resigned, affectionate and devout, as well as in the height of my vigour, I may do my duty; and if I earnestly strive to do my duty, surely I may confidently leave the issue with God. I will therefore endeavour to struggle nobly against my spirit's infirmities. My God and my duty—what is there that is not comprehended in these few words?

"Resolve resolutely (says Henry Ware) that *nothing whatever*, either in your feelings or circumstances, shall deter you from doing what you

think you ought. Never stand and think about it and dread it, but go at once and do it. You remember the coward dies a thousand deaths in fearing one. I have died ten thousand in the agony of these fears."

"Rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him—words still dearer and more beautiful—Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him, and He will give thee thy heart's desires."

But the most encouraging and sustaining accents that I know or that I expect ever to hear, are those of the blessed Saviour himself; "The cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

O Father! who art acquainted with the weakness of Thy child, ere he kneels at Thy footstool and implores forgiveness and strength, look down on, pity and bless him now. I ask to be able to do my duty and place myself entirely in Thy hands. I want nothing more. This is everything to me, and I believe that Thou deniest it to none, who ask Thee steadfastly, with the soul and life, as well as with the lips. So far as I have already complied with Thy conditions, I have succeeded; but how much have I fallen short even of my own imperfect standard! Holy Father! give me determination, steadfastness and persever-

ance, and I shall accomplish all I desire ;—I shall be childlike in my obedience to Thee,—I shall be childlike in my entire confidingness in Thee, I shall be Thy child in holiness, well-doing and joy. Yes, O Father Almighty, everything—everything in the universe, that I need care for, will be mine, if I can only deeply engrave upon my heart this one line, "My God and my duty."

On the Imitation of Christ.

Desire not that consolation, which taketh from thee compunction : neither affect that contemplation, which leadeth to haughtiness of mind.

For all that is high is not holy,—nor all that is sweet good,—nor every desire pure,—nor is everything that is dear unto us pleasing to God.

Willingly accept that grace, whereby thou mayst ever be found more humble, and more affected with holy fear, and mayst become more ready to renounce thyself.

Remember that Jesus Christ hath many lovers of his heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of his cross,—many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation,—many followers in the breaking of bread, but few in his abstinence and passion.

But, if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee, he will come unto thee and show thee his own consolation.

All his glory and beauty are from within, and there he delighteth himself.

The inward man he often visiteth; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, familiarity exceeding wonderful.

"I sleep, but my heart waketh."

We sleep in peace in the arms of God, when we yield ourselves up to His providence, in a delightful consciousness of His tender mercies; no more restless uncertainties, no more anxious desires, no more impatience at the place we are in; for it is God who has put us there, and who holds us in His arms. Can we be unsafe where He has placed us, and where He watches over us as a parent watches a child? This confiding repose, in which earthly care sleeps, is the true vigilance of the heart; yielding itself up to God, with no other support than Him, it thus watches while we sleep. This is the love of Him, that will not sleep even in death.

Christians, the Heirs of Hope.

Comfort yourselves, O ye faithful, in that ye are heirs of hope; let no adversity destroy your confidence.

Does our Lord defer awhile? Expect, and be ready:

He will surely come, He will not tarry.

Wait His leisure; for, yet a little time, and He will bring relief: He cometh, and His reward is with Him.

He mercifully stays till our souls are sanctified, and able to bear the splendour of His presence.

Without preparation, who may abide when He appeareth, like the refiner's fire, to judge and purify the earth?

To the righteous, will He graciously unveil His glories, and our eyes shall see Him as He is.

All our great hopes shall be fulfilled in His presence, and our long expectation shall be abundantly rewarded.

We shall remember our afflictions only as the way to felicity; and the thoughts of our past labours, so recompensed, how will they delight us!

The delay of our joys shall infinitely improve

them, and everything will conspire to perfect our happiness.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercies, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us.

We are pilgrims here; our home is above.

All things pass away, and thou together with them. In Heaven ought to be thy home, and all earthly things should be looked upon as by the way.

It were better to avoid sin, than to fly death.

O how wise and happy is he, who now laboureth to be in his life, such a one, as he will wish he had been, when he comes to die!

The Kingdom of Heaven must come within us.

O happiness unspeakable, to see the saints, to be with the saints, and to be a saint! to behold and possess God for ever and ever. Let us ponder these things with earnest mind; let us desire them with perfect desire, that we may quickly reach them.

If thou ask, How is this to be done, by what merits, or by what appliances?—hear. It is in the power of him that worketh; for the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence. The kingdom of Heaven, O man, asks no other price save thyself only. Whatever be thy worth, it is enough. Give thyself, and thou shalt have Heaven. Why art thou troubled at the price? Christ gave himself up, that he might acquire thee as a kingdom for God the Father. So give thyself, that thou mayest be His kingdom, and that sin may not reign in thy mortal body, but the spirit in the acquisition of life.

"Those who sleep in Jesus."

Let us not look on death, as pagan moralists, but as Christians; that is, as St. Paul says, as those who have "hope." Without Jesus Christ, it

is full of terror; but in him it is gracious and fair and holy. All events are rendered sweet by Jesus Christ,—nor is death wanting in its share of the blessed influence. The reason of his submitting himself to death and suffering as he did, was that he might sanctify them to us.

A Parable.

In brotherly union the Angel of Sleep and the Angel of Death wandered through the earth. It was evening; they laid themselves down on a hill not far from the habitations of men. A melancholy stillness reigned around, and the evening-bell died away in the distant villages.

Still and silent as is their work, sat the two beneficent Genii of Humanity hand-in-hand; and the night was coming fast.

Then the genius of Slumber arose from his mossy couch, and strewed with gentle hand the invisible slumber seeds. The evening carried them to the dwellings of the wearied peasants.

Then did sweet sleep come upon the dwellers in the peasant huts, from the grey-haired man who goes on a staff, even to the infant in the cradle. The sick man forgot his pain, the sorrowful his grief, the poor their cares; all eyes were closed.

When his mission was fulfilled the benevolent genius of Sleep laid himself down again beside his serious brother.

"When the morning dawn appeareth," said he with glad innocence, "then men will bless me as their friend and benefactor! O what joy! thus privately and unseen to do good! How happy are we, invisible messengers of the good Spirit! How fair is our still vocation!"

Thus spake the friendly Angel of Sleep. The Death-angel looked at him with silent grief; and a tear, such as the undying weep, stood in his large dark eye. "Alas!" said he, "why cannot I, as thou dost, make myself happy with glad thanks? The earth calleth me her enemy and joy-troubler."

"O, my brother," replied the Angel of Sleep, "will not the good in his awakening know you for his friend and benefactor, and, grateful, bless you? Are we not brothers, and messengers of one Father?"

So said he; and the eye of the Angel of Death sparkled, and yet more close was the embrace of the brother angels.

Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.

"*Lazarus, our friend, sleepeth!*" In these words Jesus traced a beautiful inscription on the grave of his deceased friend. It was not from delicacy, but from a deep feeling of truth, that he did not mention the name of death, but spoke of it as a sleep—a soft and sure transition to a better life. And this should ever remain the sole idea and feeling of death in the language and in the thoughts of Christians.

The natural sleep is given us as a type, as a daily impression of death. As, in that natural sleep, the outward part of men undergoes a kind of death, while the vital flame still burns on within, and gathers fresh vigor in its strange and inexplicable retirement, till it returns to renew the limbs and to re-animate the whole external creation, and the joyous morning smiles around us and within us; so what we call death is but a longer, a more mysterious and more hidden retirement of the vital principle, preparatory to the renovation of our powers in another life. As without sleep we could not enjoy the coming light of the morrow, so, without death, without the quickening and transformation of our mortal remains, we cannot

enjoy that brighter morning, which succeeds the grave. Sleep and death are brothers—the gentlest and most beneficent necessities of nature—separating, as with the shades of night, one day from another. Thou sleepest, brother of Jesus! deep is thy slumber, narrow thy chamber, and lowly thy bed of dust. But already from afar, whilst as yet thou hearest it not, the step of thine awakener approaches. The hour is come, and the voice of thy friend is heard without thy grave, "Lazarus, come forth! my friend, awake! the morning is come, and the hours of thy slumber are over and gone! a lovelier morning dawns upon thee! The sunshine of spring is on the hills, fairer than it shone upon thee yesterday! Come forth, my friend! Lazarus, awake!"

On Immortality.

I have seen the flower withering on the stalk, and its bright leaves spread on the ground:—I looked again, and it sprung forth afresh; the stem was crowned with new buds, and the sweetness thereof filled the air.

I have seen the sun set in the west, and the shades of night shut in the wide horizon; there was no colour, nor shape, nor beauty, nor music;

gloom and darkness brooded around:—I looked, the sun broke forth again from the east, he gilded the mountain tops; the lark rose to meet him from her low nest, and the shades of darkness fell away.

I have seen the insect, being come to its full size, languish and refuse to eat. It spun itself a tomb, and was shrouded in the silken cone; it lay without feet or shape, or power to move:—I looked again, it had burst its tomb; it was full of life, and sailed on coloured wings through the soft air; it rejoiced in its new being.

Thus shall it be with thee, O man! and so shall thy life be renewed.

Beauty shall spring up out of ashes; and life out of the dust.

A little while shalt thou lie in the ground, as the seed lieth in the bosom of the earth; but thou shalt be raised again; and, if thou art good, thou shalt never die any more.

Who is he that cometh to burst open the prison-doors of the tomb; to bid the dead awake, and to gather his redeemed from the four winds of Heaven?

He descendeth on a fiery cloud; the sound of a trumpet goeth before him; thousands of angels are on his right hand.

It is Jesus, the Son of God—the Saviour of men—the Friend of the good.

He cometh in the glory of his Father; he hath received power from on high.

Mourn not, therefore, child of immortality! for the spoiler, that laid waste the works of God, is subdued: Jesus hath conquered death. Child of immortality! mourn no longer.

Welcome in Heaven.

Thou never wast so welcome to thy dearest friend,—not even to thy father, husband or wife, as thou shalt be into the presence and embracements of thy Lord.

Thou hearest and readest and partly believest now how He loveth us. Then shalt thou feel how He loveth thee in particular.

If the angels of God have joy at thy conversion, what joy will there be at thy entrance into Heaven!

If a returning prodigal find himself in the arms of his father's love, and be welcomed with kisses, robes and a feast, what a welcome may we expect for the sainted spirit, when it cometh into the presence of God's glorious love, which exceedeth all the love of man, as omnipotency

doth exceed our weakness! O wait and pray a little longer, and all thy danger will be past, and thou wilt be safe for ever.

Fruits of the Spirit in Sickness.

Come, Let us praise the goodness of God, who orders everything for the best; our life and our death are equally His care.

The Lord casts us down upon the bed of sickness, and draws the curtain between the world and us.

Shutting out all its vain designs; and contracting our business to a little chamber. In that quiet solitude He speaks to our hearts,—and sets our whole life, as in a mirror, before us.

There He discovers to us the treachery of the world, and invites us by the exhibition of its vanity, to prepare for a better.

Thither He sends His messengers of peace, to perfect our reconciliation.

O! how different are the thoughts of that hour from those of careless, unreflecting health!

How do we now censure what we once esteemed!

How easily are we led to wiser resolutions!

When our unruly senses are rebuked with

pains, and the fears of death teach the rashness of our minds sobriety;

When the occasions of sin are removed from our way, and everything about us exhorts to repentance;

Adored be Thy name, O Lord! whose mercy sanctifies into a blessing even the chastisement of Thy rod.

Thou bringest us low, to awaken our humility, and prescribest sickness to cure our infirmity.

Thou commandest, and the grave is inexorable; with it is no respect of persons.

Thou tellest us by experience that all must die: but kindly hidest in clouds and darkness the time and place;

That everywhere we may be upon our guard, and, through all our days, may be looking for the summons.

Thou teachest us by the removal of those whom we love, to renew the contemplation of our own grave, and the wholesome thoughts of a future world.

Let not, O Lord! these gracious designs be lost upon us; but let such scenes be attended with the most serious reflections upon our own mortality.

And O! cause every meditation of this nature

to make us the more diligent in preparing for our latter end.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?"

Lift up thyself, O mourning soul! lift up thyself, raise thine eyes that are wet with tears! Why are thine eyes wet with tears? Why are they bent continually upon the earth? And why dost thou go mourning as one forsaken of thy God?

O thou that toilest ever, and restest not; thou that wishest ever, and art not satisfied; thou that carest ever, and art not stablished; why dost thou toil and wish? Why is thine heart withered with care, and why are thine eyes sunk with watching?

Rest quietly on thy couch, steep thine eyelids in sleep, wrap thyself in sleep as in a garment, for He careth for thee; He is with thee, He is about thee, He compasseth thee; He compasseth thee on every side. The voice of thy shepherd among the rocks.

He calleth thee, He beareth thee tenderly in His arms; He suffereth thee not to stray. Thy soul is precious in His sight, O child of many hopes!

For He careth for thee in the things which

perish, and He hath provided yet better things than those.

Raise thyself, O beloved soul; turn thine eyes from care, and sin, and pain; turn them to the brightness of the heavens, and contemplate thine inheritance; for thy birthright is in the skies,—and thine inheritance amongst the stars of light.

The herds of the pasture sicken and die, they lie down among the clods of the valley, the foot passeth over them: they are no more. But it is not so with thee.

For the Almighty is the Father of thy spirit, and He hath given thee a portion of His own immortality.

Look around thee, and behold the earth, for it is the gift of the Father to thee, and to thy sons, that they should possess it.

Out of the ground cometh forth food; the hills are covered with fresh shade; and the animals, thy subjects, sport among the trees.

Delight thyself in them, for they are good; and all that thou seest is thine.

But nothing that thou seest is like unto thyself; thou art not of them; nor shalt thou return to them.

Thou hast a mighty void which they cannot fill; thou hast an immortal hunger which they

cannot satisfy: they are not worthy that they should occupy thee.

As the fire which, while it resteth on the hearth, yet sendeth forth sparks continually towards Heaven, so do thou from amidst the world send up fervent thoughts to God.

As the lark, though her nest is on the ground, as soon as she becometh fledged, poiseth her wings and findeth them strong to bear her through the light air, springeth up aloft, singing as she soars;

So let thy desires mount swiftly upwards and thou shalt see the world beneath thy feet.

And be not overwhelmed with many thoughts. Heaven is thine, and God is thine: thou shalt be blessed with everlasting salvation and peace upon thy head for evermore.

"Let not your heart be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go and prepare a place for you."

O Lord of Heaven and earth! we are fearfully and wonderfully made; our bodies are like the flowers perishing in the evening; our life is a thin vapour, which appeareth a very little while, and then vanisheth away.

As I lie here on my couch of sickness,—how delightful appears that health, which I so little valued, when it was mine! how lovely and beautiful are the woods and fields, and mountains and streams, on which I used to gaze with so much indifference! how precious those opportunities of improvement, and those means of usefulness, which I have so frequently neglected! alas! shall I no more rise up in strength, and behold the bright sun and the fertile pastures, and go forth to my daily occupations? shall I leave this world—when I have done so little for myself and others, and lie down in the grave, where there is no work or device?

Peace, troubled soul, enlarge thy views, look beyond the narrow boundaries of mortality. Thou who callest God thy Father, and Christ thy Saviour, and Heaven thy home, this disquietude, this despondency, becometh not thee; brighter regions are there for thee somewhere; rather shouldst thou rejoice at the blissful change which awaits thee.

Blessed thoughts; my heart is strengthened, —no longer am I afraid: now can I say firmly, and with pious gratitude and joy, Farewell, beautiful land of my pilgrimage, farewell for a season, beloved fellow-pilgrims,—death's gloomy valley is

henceforth nothing to me,—my Father leadeth me across it; already I see the glorious and spiritual world, where dwell the greatest, wisest and best beings in the universe. I will not murmur, when I am called to join them; I will say, Yes, Father, I am ready, for with Thy gracious aid I shall mount up on high; Thou hast rendered me victorious over death and the grave.

The City of God.

O my soul, let us return to the celestial city, in which we are written and enrolled citizens. For as fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and as heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, let us consider the renowned felicity of our city, as far as it is in our power. Let us say then with the prophet, "Oh, what glorious things are spoken of thee, city of God! the dwelling of all who rejoice is in thee, for thou art founded for the exultation of the whole earth. There is no old age in thee, nor the misery that accompanies old age. There is none maimed in thee, nor lame, nor misproportioned, nor deformed; but all come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fairness of Christ." What life is there more blessed than

this? There is no fear of poverty, none of the imbecility of illness. None is injured, none is angry, none is envious; and there is no covetous affection to set on fire. There is no ambition of honor or power; no terror, no hell. There is no death of body or soul; but a life of blessedness, with the gift of immortality. There will be no discord, but all sweet compliances, for the agreement of the saints will be one. All is contained in peace and joy: all is tranquil and quiet. There is perpetual splendour; not that which now is, but as much brighter as it is happier: for that city, we read, will have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, but the Lord omnipotent will lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. There the saints will shine as the stars through the everlasting ages, and they who instruct many in righteousness, as the splendour of the firmament. Wherefore there will be no night, no darkness, but the harmonious and tempered disposition of the elements will be such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, save of them who are found worthy to enjoy it, whose names are written in the Book of Life. But above these things is the companionship with the bright societies of angels and of archangels and of all the

heavenly virtues; the sight of the patriarchs and prophets, of the apostles and all the saints,—yea of our beloved parents. These things are glorious, but far more glorious is the sight of God's countenance of favour, and of the uncircumscribed light; yea, the glory will be transcendent when we shall behold God Himself, when we shall behold Him, and He shall dwell in us, and we shall see Him for evermore.

Praise in Life and Death.

We will sing praises to our God, while we have our being.

When all nature smiles around us; when the earth is covered with grass, and adorned with flowers; when the valleys stand thick with corn, and the trees are laden with fruits; when the tuneful birds warble their notes in Thy praise, and numerous tribes of living creatures exult in Thy bounty; we also will join the general song, and adore the riches of Thy goodness.

In the barren months of winter, when the fields and groves no longer rejoice, when the feathered choir are no longer heard, and many of Thy creatures are buried in forgetfulness; then our souls shall not forget Thee, our lips shall not be silent in Thy praise.

When Thou fillest our cup with blessings, and causest the voice of health and gladness to be heard in our dwellings; when our path is pleasant, and our prospects are cheering; then shall our tongues be employed in extolling Thy loving-kindness.

And when months of vanity and wearisome nights are appointed unto us; when dangers encompass our path, and sorrows depress our hearts; even then will we manifest our submission to Thine infinite wisdom.

Amidst all the changes of life and the various dispensations of Thy providence; in abundance and in want; in success and in disappointment; in health and in sickness; in all things will we acknowledge and celebrate the goodness which, by useful discipline and trial, conducts us to a blessed and everlasting life.

And in the last solemn scene, when we lie on the bed of death: when our tongues can no longer express our thoughts, and all our bodily powers shall fail; then it shall be the language of our hearts, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

PSALMS AND HYMNS.

Poetry is music to the soul; and as music hath charms to soothe the troubled breast, so hath poetry to solace and refresh the weary spirit. While, therefore, those who look for returning health are in their hearts singing for joy at the new life and strength which are being infused into their trembling frames, not less will the Poet's ethereal strain be welcome to those whose sickness is a sickness unto death, for they may in truth take up the fabled language of the dying swan:—

> "I sing now, for I die, my fetters leaving,—
> My spirit rises, earthly bonds are sprung:
> Farewell! I am rising to yon joyful heavens;
> There shall I sing with freer, gladder song!
> My life, my love, my music there belong!"

Psalm XXIII.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my spirit;
He leadeth me in the right paths,
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me,
Thy crook and Thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me,
In the presence of mine enemies.
Thou anointest my head with oil;
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life,
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

PSALM XXXIX.

I said, I will take heed to my ways,
That I sin not with my tongue;
I was dumb with silence, I held my peace even from good;
But my sorrow was stirred.
My heart was hot within me,
While I was musing the fire burned,
Then spake I with my tongue.
Lord, make me to know mine end,
And the measure of my days, what it is,
That I may know how frail I am!
Behold, Thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth,
And my age is as nothing before Thee;
Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.
Surely every man walketh in a vain show;
Surely he disquieteth himself in vain;
He heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them.
What, then, O Lord, is my hope?

My hope is in Thee!
Deliver me from all my transgressions;
Make me not the reproach of the foolish.
I was dumb, I opened not my mouth,
Because Thou didst it.
Remove from me Thy stroke,
By the blow of Thine hand am I consumed.
When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity,
Thou causest his beauty to waste away like a moth.
Surely every man is vanity.
Hear my prayer, O Lord,
Give ear to my cry;
Hold not Thy peace at my tears,
For I am but a stranger with Thee,
A sojourner, as were all my Fathers.
O spare me that I may recover strength,
Before I go hence and be no more.

PSALMS XLII. AND XLIII.

As the hart panteth for the water-brooks,
So panteth my soul for Thee, O God!
My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;
When shall I come and appear before God?
My tears have been my meat day and night,
While it is said to me continually, "Where is Thy God?"
When I remember these things,
I pour out my soul within me;
For I had gone with the multitude,
I went with them to the house of God,

With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept holy-day.
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him,
Who is the health of my countenance and my God.
O my God, my soul is cast down within me;
Therefore will I remember Thee from the land of Jordan,
And of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.
Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy water-spouts;
All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.
Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time,
And in the night His song shall be with me,
And my prayer unto the God of my life.
I will say unto God my rock,
Why hast Thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning?
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him,
Who is the health of my countenance and my God!
Judge me, O God, and plead my cause.
Send forth Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me
Let them bring me to Thy holy mountain and Thy dwelling place!
Then will I go unto the altar of God,
Unto God my exceeding joy,
Yea upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God, my God!

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him,
Who is the health of my countenance and my God!

Psalm XLVI.

God is our refuge and strength;
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea,
Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.
There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God,
The holy dwelling-place of the most High.
God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;
God will help her, and that right early.
The nations raged; kingdoms were moved;
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.
Come, behold the works of the Lord,
What desolations He hath made in the earth.
He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth;
He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder;
He burneth the chariot in the fire.
Be still, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

PSALM LXI.

Hear my cry, O God;
Attend unto my prayer!
From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed.
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
For Thou hast been my refuge,
My strong tower against the enemy.
I shall dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever;
I will trust in the covert of Thy wings.
For Thou, O God, wilt hear my vows,
Thou wilt give me the inheritance of those who fear Thy name.

PSALM XC.

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge
In all generations!
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God!
Man Thou turnest again to dust,
And sayest, "Return ye children of men."
For a thousand years in Thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,

And as a watch in the night.
Thou carriest them away as with a flood;
They are as a sleep;
In the morning they are like grass which groweth up;
In the morning, it flourisheth and groweth up;
In the evening, it is cut down and withereth.
We spend our years as a tale that is told.
The days of our years are three score years and ten,
And if, by reason of strength, they be four score years,
Yet is their strength labour and sorrow,
For it is soon cut off and we fly away.
So teach us to number our days,
That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!
Return, O Lord, how long ——?
And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.
O satisfy us early with Thy mercy,
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us
And the years wherein we have seen evil.
Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
And Thy glory unto their children.
And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;
And establish for us the work of our hands;
Yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it.

PSALM CXXX.

Out of the depths do I cry unto Thee, O Lord!
O Lord, hear my voice,
Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
But with Thee is forgiveness
That Thou mayst be feared.
I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait,
And in His word do I hope.
My soul waiteth for the Lord
More than they who watch for the morning,
Yea, more than they who watch for the morning.

See also Psalm LXXXVI.

A PSALM FOR THE AGED.

LXXI. 17—23.

O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth;
And thus far have I declared Thy wonders;
Now also when I am old and gray-headed,
O God, forsake me not.
While I declare Thy power to this generation,
Thy might to all that are to come.
For Thy righteousness, O God, is very high,
Wonderful things hast Thou done!
O God, who is like unto Thee?
Thou hast suffered me to see many and grievous distresses,
Thou wilt again revive me,

And wilt bring me back from the depths of the earth.
Thou wilt increase my greatness,
And comfort me on every side.
Then will I praise Thee with the psaltery,
Even Thy faithfulness, O my God!
To Thee will I sing with the harp,
O Thou Holy One of Israel.
My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto Thee,
And my soul which Thou hast redeemed.

PSALMS ON RECOVERY.

PSALM CIII.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits!
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies:
Who satisfieth thine old age with good,
So that Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.
The Lord executeth righteousness
And judgment for all that are oppressed.
He made known His ways unto Moses,
His acts unto the children of Israel.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always chide,

Neither will He keep His anger for ever.
He hath not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For as the Heaven is high above the earth,
So great is His mercy towards them that fear Him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath He removed our transgressions from us.
Even as a father pitieth his children,
So the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.
For He knoweth our frame,
He remembereth that we are dust.
As for man, his days are as grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone,
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear Him,
And His righteousness to children's children.
To such as keep His covenant,
And remember His commandments to do them.
The Lord hath established His throne in the Heavens,
And His kingdom ruleth over all.
Bless the Lord, ye His angels,
That excel in strength,
That do His commandments,
Hearkening unto the voice of His word.
Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts;
Ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure.
Bless the Lord, all His works,

In all places of His dominion!
Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Psalm CXVI.

I love the Lord that He hath heard my supplications;
Because He hath inclined His ear to me,
I will call upon Him as long as I live.
The sorrows of death encompassed me,
And the pains of the grave gat hold of me;
I found trouble and sorrow.
Then I called upon the Lord:
O Lord, I beseech Thee deliver me!
Gracious is the Lord and righteous,
Yea, our God is merciful.
The Lord preserveth the simple;
I was brought low, and He helped me.
Return to Thy rest, O my soul;
For the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee;
Thou hast delivered my soul from death,
Mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
I will walk before the Lord,
In the land of the living.
I believed, although I said
"I am grievously afflicted!"
Although I said in my haste
"All men are liars."
What shall I render unto the Lord
For all His benefits towards me?
I will take the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord,
In the presence of all His people.
Precious in the sight of the Lord,
Is the death of His saints.
O Lord, truly I am Thy servant.
I am Thy servant, the son of Thine handmaid,
Thou hast loosed my bonds.
I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows unto the Lord,
In the presence of all His people,
In the courts of the house of the Lord,
In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.
Praise ye the Lord!

See also Psalms XXXIV. and CVII.

HYMNS.

I.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble."—Ps. l. 15.

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er you languish,
Come, at God's altar fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish—
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope where all others die, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, in God's name saying—
"Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure."

II.

"I am not alone, because the Father is with me."—John xvi. 32.

Why should dreams so dark and dreary
Fill my thought?
Is there nought,
Nought to soothe the weary?

Is the sun in Heaven no longer,
When the rain
Sweeps the plain?
Soon he blazes stronger.

Is the floweret's sleep eternal,
When its cup,
Folded up,
Waits the breezes vernal?

Why should man, then, child of sorrow,
Mourn his doom?
Present gloom
Will be light to-morrow.

Even here, all pain is fleeting;
Even here,
Joy and care
Join in constant greeting.

But where all our hopes are tending,
Peace and love
Reign above,
Bliss and joy unending.

III.

"In my distress, I called upon the Lord."—Ps. xviii. 6.

As down in the sunless retreats of the ocean,
Sweet flowers are springing no mortal can see,
So, deep in my soul, the still prayer of devotion,
Unheard by the world, rises silent to Thee,
My God! silent to Thee—
Pure, warm, silent to Thee.

As still to the star of its worship, though clouded,
The needle points faithfully o'er the dim sea,
So, dark as I roam, in this wintry world shrouded,
The hope of my spirit turns trembling to Thee,
My God! trembling to Thee—
True, fond, trembling to Thee.

IV.

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Heb. xii. 11.

He sendeth sun, He sendeth shower,
Alike they 're needful for the flower:
And joys and tears alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment.
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! Thy will, not mine, be done.

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs, whom they trust and love?
Creator! I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to Thee:
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! Thy will, not mine, be done.

O! ne'er will I at life repine—
Enough that Thou hast made it mine.

When falls the shadow cold of deâth,
I yet will sing with parting breath,
As comes to me or shade or sun,
Father! Thy will, not mine, be done.

V.

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17.

Chamber of sickness! much to thee I owe,
Though dark thou be;
The lessons it imports me most to know,
I owe to thee!
A sacred seminary thou hast been,
I trust, to train me to a happier scene.

Chamber of sickness! suffering and alone,
My friends withdrawn,
The blessed beams of heavenly truth have shone
On me, forlorn,
With such a hallowed vividness and power
As ne'er were granted to a brighter hour.

Chamber of sickness! midst thy silence, oft
A voice is heard,
Which though it fall like dew on flowers, so soft,
Yet speaks each word
Into the achi ng heart's unseen recess,
With power no earthly accents could possess.

Chamber of sickness! in that bright abode
Where there is no more pain,
If, through the mercy of my Saviour God,
A seat I gain,
This theme shall tune my golden harp's soft lays
That in thy shelter passed my earthly days.

VI.

"My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."—Ps. lxxiii. 26.

Father, Thy gentle chastisement
Falls kindly on my burdened soul;
I see its merciful intent,
To warn me back to Thy control;
And pray that, while I kiss the rod,
I may find perfect peace with God.

The errors of my heart I know;
I feel my deep infirmities;
For often virtuous feelings glow,
And holy purposes arise;
But, like the morning clouds, decay,
As empty, though as fair, as they.

Forgive the weakness I deplore;
And let Thy grace abound in me,
That I may trust my heart no more,
But wholly cast myself on Thee;
Oh, let my Father's strength be mine,
And my devoted life be Thine!

VII.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Ps. cxxvi. 6.

There is a secret in the ways of God
With His own children, which none others know,
That sweetens all He does; and if such peace,
While under His afflicting hand we find,
What will it be to see Him as He is,
And pass the reach of all that now disturbs
The tranquil soul's repose! To contemplate,
In retrospect unclouded, all the means
By which His wisdom has prepared His saints
For the vast weight of glory which remains!
Come then, affliction, if my Father bids,
And be my frowning friend: a friend that frowns
Is better than a smiling enemy.
We welcome clouds which bring the former rain,
Tho' they the present prospect blacken round,
And shade the beauties of the opening year,
That, by their stores enriched, the earth may yield
A fruitful summer and a plenteous crop.

VIII.

"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him."—Heb. xii. 5.

Before good seed in us will rooting take,
Afflictions ploughes and harrowes must prepare us;
And that the truer level He may make,
When we are sunk too low, God's hand must reare us.
Then neither stormings of adversitie,
Shall drowne the seedes of hope, which we have sowne;
Nor shall the sunbeames of prosperitie,
Drie up their moisture, ere they ripe are growne.
O Lord! Thou know'st the nature of my minde;
Thou know'st my bodye's tempers what they are;
And by what meanes they shall be best inclined,
Such fruits to yeeld, as they were made to beare.
My barren soule, therefore manure Thou so;
So harrow it; so emptie, and so fill;
So raise it up, and bring it down so low
As best may lay it levell to Thy will.
In this desire, the worke is well begunne;
Say Thou the word and all is fully done.

IX.

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord."—Lam. iii. 40.

O what a cunning guest
Is this same Grief! within my heart I made
Closets, and in them many a chest:
And, like a master in my trade,

In those chests, boxes; in each box, a till:—
Yet Grief knows all, and enters when he will.

No screw, no piercer can
Into a piece of timber work and wind,
As God's afflictions into man,
When He a torture hath designed.
They are too subtle for the subtlest hearts;
And fall, like rheums, upon the tenderest parts.

We are the earth; and they,
Like moles within us, heave and cast about:
And, till they foot and clutch their prey,
They never cool, much less give out.
No smith can make such locks but they have keys:
Closets are halls to them; and hearts, highways.

Only an open breast
Doth shut them out, so that they cannot enter;
Or, if they enter, cannot rest,
But quickly seek some new adventure.
Smooth, open hearts no fast'ning have; but fiction
Doth give a hold and handle to affliction.

Wherefore my faults and sins,
Lord, I acknowledge; take Thy plagues away!
For, since confession pardon wins,
I challenge here the brightest day,
The clearest diamond; let them do their best,
They shall be thick and cloudy, to my breast.

X.

"When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Ps. lxi. 2.

Soul of our souls, and safeguard of the world!
Sustain—Thou only canst—the sick of heart;
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto Thee and Thine!
* * * * * * *
He thus continued—lifting up his eyes
To Heaven—How beautiful this dome of sky,
And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed
At Thy command, how awful! Shall the soul,
Human and rational, report of Thee
Even less than these?
—Come labour, when the worn-out frame requires
Perpetual sabbath; come disease and want;
And sad exclusion through decay of sense;
But leave me unabated trust in Thee—
And let Thy favour to the end of life,
Inspire me with ability to seek
Repose and hope among eternal things!

XI.

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench."—Matt. xii. 20.

How oft we fear and falter by the way,
While fancy paints with clouds the future sky,
Till mortals think they have on earth no stay,
And none to wipe the tear from sorrow's eye.

But fear not, timid soul, for God will give
Thee strength thy cross to bear—to tread the vale.—
He gives e'en birds a wintry robe t' outlive
Each blast of winter's drear and chilling gale,
Or else directs their flight to summer fields,
Where flowers droop not, fade not, nor winters freeze,
Where summer bland in purer friendship yields
A safe retreat among her woodland trees;—
And so He gives us strength our cross to bear,
And watches o'er us with a Father's care.

XII.

"The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness."—Ps. xli. 3.

All that God owns, He constantly is healing,
Quietly, gently, softly, but most surely;—
He helps the lowliest herb, with wounded stalk,
To rise again. See! from the heavens fly down
All gentle powers to cure the blinded lamb!
Deep in the treasure-house of wealthy Nature,
A ready instinct wakes and moves
To clothe the naked sparrow in the nest,
Or trim the plumage of an aged raven;—
Yea, in the slow decaying of a rose,
God works as well as in the unfolding bud;
He works with gentleness unspeakable
In death itself; a thousand times more careful
Than even the mother, by her sick child watching.

XIII.

"The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God."—Wisd. iii. 1.

"Thy will be done." In devious way
The hurrying stream of life may run,
Yet still our grateful hearts shall say
"Thy will be done."

"Thy will be done." If o'er us shine
A gladdening and a prosperous sun,
This prayer will make it more divine,
"Thy will be done."

"Thy will be done." Though shrouded o'er
Our path with gloom, one comfort—one
Is ours:—to breathe, while we adore,
"Thy will be done."

XIV.

"Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you."—James iv. 8.

Nearer, my God, to Thee!
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Though, like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I 'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

There let the way appear,
Steps unto Heaven;
All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Then with my waking thoughts
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I 'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

XV.

"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."—Romans xiv. 8.

Living or dying, Lord, I would be Thine!
O, what is life?
A toil, a strife,
Were it not lighted by Thy love divine:

I ask not wealth,
I crave not health—
Living or dying, Lord, I would be Thine!

O, what is death?
When the poor breath
In parting, can the soul to Thee resign;
While patient Love
Her trust doth prove—
Living or dying, Lord, I would be Thine!

Throughout my days
Be constant praise
Uplift to Thee from out this heart of mine:
So shall I be
Brought nearer Thee—
Living or dying, Lord, I would be Thine!

XVI.

"In your patience possess ye your souls."—Luke xxi. 19.

There are, who darkling and alone,
Would wish the weary night were gone,
Though dawning morn should only show
The secret of their unknown woe:
Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain
To ease them of doubt's galling chain:
"Only disperse the cloud," they cry,
"And if our fate be death, give light and let us die."

Unwise I deem them, Lord, unmeet
To profit by Thy chastening sweet,
For Thou would'st have us linger still
Upon the verge of good or ill,
That on Thy guiding hand unseen
Our undivided hearts may lean,
And this our frail and foundering bark
Glide in the narrow wake of Thy beloved ark.

XVII.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"—Ps. xxvii. 1.

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Should'st lead me on.
I loved to see and choose my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and hill, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night be gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
That I have loved long since, and lost erewhile.

XVIII.

"Fear not, for I am with thee."—Isaiah xliii. 5.

The child alone, in trembling goes
Into the darkened room,
His timid eyes in terror close
Against the silent gloom.

But if his father go before,
And hold him by the hand,
And keep him close,—he fears no more,
But boldly takes his stand.

And if he hear his father's voice
And clasp his hand the while,
His little heart can e'en rejoice,
And he can look and smile.

So let us follow to the tomb,
The steps that Jesus trod;
He 's gone before, and through the gloom
He leads us to our God.

XIX.

"Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done."—Luke xxii. 42.

Lord my God, do Thou Thy holy will—
I will lie still—

I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm,
And break the charm,
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
In perfect rest.

Wild Fancy, peace! thou must not me beguile
With thy false smile:
I know thy flatteries and thy cheating ways;
Be silent, Praise,
Blind guide with syren voice, and blinding all
That hear thy call.

Come, Self-devotion, high and pure,
Thoughts that in thankfulness endure
Though dearest hopes are faithless found,
And dearest hearts are bursting round.
Come, Resignation, spirit meek,
And let me kiss thy placid cheek,
And read in thy pale eye serene
Their blessing, who by faith can wean
Their hearts from sense, and learn to love
God only, and the joys above.

"O Father! not my will, but Thine be done"—
So spake the Son.
Be this our charm, mellowing Earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys:
That we may cling for ever to Thy breast
In perfect rest!

XX.

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name."—John xii. 27, 28.

Lowly and solemn be
Thy children's cry to Thee,
Father divine!
A hymn of suppliant breath,
Owning that life and death
Alike are Thine!

O Father! in that hour,
When earth all succouring power
Shall disavow;
When spear, and shield, and crown,
In faintness are cast down,
Sustain us, Thou!

By him who bowed to take
The death-cup for our sake,
The thorn, the rod;
From whom the last dismay
Was not to pass away;
Aid us, O God!

Tremblers beside the grave,
We call on Thee to save,
Father divine!
Hear, hear our suppliant breath,
Keep us in life and death,
Thine, only Thine!

XXI.

"There appeared an angel unto him from Heaven, strengthening him."—Luke xxii. 43.

Father! that in the olive shade,
When the dark hour came on,
Didst, with a breath of heavenly aid,
Strengthen Thy Son.

O, by the anguish of that night
Send us down blest relief;
Or to the chastened, let Thy might
Hallow this grief!

And thou, that when the starry sky
Saw the dread strife begun,
Didst teach adoring faith to cry,
Thy will be done;

By thy meek spirit, thou of all,
That e'er have mourned the chief,
Thou Saviour! if the stroke must fall,
Hallow this grief!

XXII.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33.

When the spark of life is waning,
Weep not for me!
When the languid eye is straining,
Weep not for me!

When the feeble pulse is ceasing,
Start not at its swift decreasing,
'Tis the fetter'd soul's releasing.
Weep not for me!

When the pangs of death assail me,
Weep not for me!
Christ is mine—he cannot fail me,
Weep not for me!
Yes, though sin and doubt endeavour
From his love my soul to sever,
Jesus is my strength for ever.
Weep not for me!

XXIII.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life."—John xiv. 6.

Go to dark Gethsemane,
Ye that feel the tempter's power:
Your Redeemer's conflict see;
Watch with him one bitter hour:
Turn not from his griefs away;
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment-hall;
View the Lord of life arraigned;
O the wormwood and the gall;
O the pangs his soul sustained!

Shun not suffering, pain, or loss;
Learn of him to bear the cross.

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;
There, submissive at his feet,
Mark that miracle of time,
Love's own sacrifice complete:
'It is finished!' hear him cry;
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb,
Where they laid his breathless clay:
All is solitude and gloom;
Who hath taken him away?
Christ is risen; he seeks the skies:
Thither learn of him to rise.

XXIV.

"Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."—1 Thess. v. 10.

He knelt, the Saviour knelt and prayed,
When but his Father's eye
Looked through the lonely garden's shade,
On that dread agony:
Messiah cried with suppliant breath,
Bowed down with sorrow unto death.

He proved them all,—the doubt, the strife,
The faint perplexing dread;
The mists that hang o'er parting life
All gathered round his head;

And the Deliverer knelt to pray,
Yet passed it not, that cup, away!

It passed not, though the stormy wave
Had sunk beneath his tread;
It passed not, though to him the grave
Had yielded up its dead:
But there was sent him from on high
A gift of strength, for man to die!

And was the Sinless thus beset
With anguish and dismay?
How may *we* meet our conflict yet,
In the dark narrow way?
Through him, through him that path who trod,
The child of grief,—the Son of God!

XXV.

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities."—Romans viii. 26.

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When I lie within my bed,
Sick at heart, and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drown'd in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true;
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to Thee I have appealed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

XXVI.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. ii. 10.

Breast the wave, Christian,
When it is strongest;
Watch for the day, Christian,
When the night is longest;
Onward and onward still,
Be thine endeavour;
The rest that remaineth,
Will be for ever.

Fight the fight, Christian,
Jesus is o'er thee:
Run the race, Christian,
Heaven is before thee:

He who hath promised,
Falteroth never;
The love of eternity,
Flows on for ever.

Lift the eye, Christian,
Just as it closeth;
Raise the heart, Christian,
Ere it reposeth;
Thee from the love of Christ
Nothing shall sever:
Mount when thy work is done,
Praise him for ever.

XXVII.

"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."—1 John iii. 3.

Lord! have mercy, and remove us
Early to Thy place of rest,
Where the heavens are calm above us,
And as calm each sainted breast.

Holiest! yet if our repentance
Be not perfect and sincere,
Lord! suspend Thy fatal sentence;
Leave us still in sadness here.

Leave us, Father, till our spirit
From each earthly taint is free,
Fit Thy kingdom to inherit,
Fit to take its rest with Thee.

XXVIII.

A SUNDAY HYMN.

Thousands, O Lord of Hosts, this day
Around Thine altar meet;
And tens of thousands throng to pay
Their homage at Thy feet.

They see Thy power and glory there,
As I have seen them too:
They read, they hear, they join in prayer,
As I was wont to do.

They sing Thy deeds as I have sung,
In sweet and solemn lays;
Were I among them, my glad tongue
Might learn new themes of praise.

For Thou art in their midst to teach,
When on Thy name they call:
And Thou hast blessings, Lord, for each,
Hast blessings, Lord, for all.

I, of such fellowship bereft,
In spirit turn to Thee:
O hast Thou not a blessing left,
A blessing, Lord, for me?

The dew lies thick upon the ground;
Shall my poor fleece be dry?
The manna rains from Heaven around;
Shall I of hunger die?

Behold Thy prisoner;—loose my bands,
If 'tis Thy gracious will:
If not,—contented in Thy hands,
Behold Thy prisoner still!

I may not to Thy courts repair,
Yet there Thou surely art;
Lord, consecrate a house of prayer
In my surrendered heart.

To faith reveal the things unseen;
To hope, the joys untold:
Let love, without a veil between,
Thy glory now behold.

O make Thy face on me to shine,
That doubt and fear may cease:
Lift up Thy countenance benign
On me,—and give me peace.

XXIX.

"I leave the world and go to the Father."—John xvi. 28.

It was a brave attempt, adventurous he
Who in the first ship broke the unknown sea;
And, leaving his dear native shores behind,
Trusted his life to the licentious wind.
I see the surging brine, the tempest raves,
He on the pine plank rides across the waves,
Exulting on the edge of thousand gaping graves:

He steers the winged boat, and shifts the sails,
Conquers the flood, and manages the gales.
Such is the soul, that leaves this mortal land,
Fearless, when the Great Master gives command.
Death is the storm: she smiles to see it roar,
And bids the tempest waft her from the shore;
Then with a skilful helm she sweeps the seas,
And manages the raging storm with ease;
Her faith can govern death,—she spreads her wings
Wide to the wind, and as she sails she sings,
And loses by degrees the sight of mortal things.
As the shores lessen, so her joys arise,
The waves roll gentler, and the tempest dies;
Now vast eternity fills all her sight;
She floats on the broad deep with infinite delight,
The seas for ever calm, the skies for ever bright.

XXX.

"Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 10.

Tell me, ye winged winds,
That round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot
Where mortals weep no more?
Some lone and pleasant dell,
Some valley in the west,
Where, free from toil and pain,
The weary soul may rest?

The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
Sighing for pity as it answer'd—No!

Tell me, thou mighty deep,
Whose billows round me play,
Know'st thou some favour'd spot,
Some island far away,
Where weary man may find
The bliss for which he sighs,
Where *sorrow* never lives,
And *friendship* never dies?
The wild waves rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopped for awhile, and sighed to answer—No!

And thou, serenest moon,
That with such holy face
Dost look upon the earth,
Asleep in night's embrace,
Tell me in all thy round
Hast thou not seen some spot
Where man, poor wanderer,
Might find a happier lot?
Behind the cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice sweet, but sad, responded—No!

Tell me, my secret soul,
O tell me, Hope and Faith,
Is there no resting-place
From sorrow, sin and death?

Is there no happy spot
Where mortals may be bless'd—
Where grief may find a balm,
And weariness a rest?
Faith, Hope and Love, (best boons to mortals given,)
Waved their bright wings and whispered—Yes, *in Heaven.*

XXXI.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John x. 10.

"What is the gift of life?"
To those subdued, and taught by wisdom's voice—
Wisdom of stern necessity, not choice—
Whose cup of joy is ebbing out in haste,
Who have no fountain to supply the waste,
Whose spirit, like some traveller gazing round
On broken columns in the desert ground,
Sees but sad traces on a lonely scene
Of what life was, and what it might have been.
Oh! is not life a sad and solemn thing?

"What is the gift of life?"
To him who reads with heaven-instructed eye,
'T is the first dawning of eternity;
The future Heaven just breaking on the sight,
The glimmerings of a still increasing light,
Its cheering scenes, foretastes of heavenly joy,
Its storms and tempests sent to purify;
Oh! is not life a bright, inspiring thing?

"What is the gift of life?"
To him whose soul through this tempestuous road
Hath past, and found its home—its Heaven, its God,
Who sees the boundless page of knowledge spread,
And years, as boundless, rolling o'er his head,
No cloud to darken the celestial light,
No sin to sully, and no grief to blight,—
Is not that better life a glorious thing?

XXXII.

"Passed from death unto life."—John v. 24.

Death comes to take me where I long to be;
One pang, and bright blooms the immortal flower;
Death comes to lead me from mortality,
To lands which know not one unhappy hour;
I have a hope, a faith—from sorrow here
I 'm led by death away,—why should I start and fear?

If I have loved the forest and the field,
Can I not love them deeper, better there?
If all that power hath made, to me doth yield
Something of good and beauty—something fair—
Freed from the grossness of mortality,
May I not love them all, and better all enjoy?

A change from woe to joy—from earth to Heaven,
Death gives me this—it leads me calmly where
The souls that long ago from mine were riven,
May meet again. Death answers many a prayer.
Bright day, shine on! be glad: days brighter far
Are stretched before my eyes than those of mortals are!

XXXIII.

"God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for He will receive me."—Ps. xlix. 15.

I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial ground God's Acre! it is just;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's Acre! Yes that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those who in the grave have sown
The seed that they have garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life, alas! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the Archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair gardens of that second birth;
And each bright blossom mingle its perfume
With that of flowers which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;
This is the field and acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow!

XXXIV.

"A better country, that is a heavenly."—Heb. xi. 16.

My soul doth pant tow'rds Thee,
My God! source of eternal life!
Flesh fights with me;
O end the strife,
And part us, that in peace I may
Unclay
My wearied spirit, and take
My flight to Thy eternal spring,
Where, for his sake
Who is my King,
I may wash all my tears away
That day.

Thou conqueror of death,
Glorious Triumpher o'er the grave,
Whose holy breath
Was spent to save
Lost mankind, make me to be styl'd
God's child:
And take me when I die,
And go unto my dust; my soul
Above the sky
With saints enrol,
That in God's arms for ever I
May lie.

XXXV.

"This mortal must put on immortality."—1 Cor. xv. 53.

Oft have I sat in secret sighs
To feel my flesh decay;
Then groaned aloud with frighted eyes
To view the tottering clay.

But I forbid my sorrows now;
Nor dares the flesh complain,
Diseases bring their profit too,
The joy o'ercomes the pain.

My cheerful soul now all the day
Sits waiting here and sings;
Looks thro' the ruins of her clay,
And practises her wings.

Faith almost changes into sight,
When from afar she spies
Her fair inheritance in light
Above created skies.

Had but the prison-walls been strong
And firm, without a flaw,
In darkness she had dwelt too long
And less of glory saw.

But now the Everlasting Hills
Thro' every chink appear;
And something of the joy she feels,
While she's a prisoner here.

The shines of Heaven rush sweetly in
At all the gaping flaws;
Visions of endless bliss are seen,
And native airs she draws.

Oh, may these walls stand tottering still,
These breaches never close—
If I must here in darkness dwell
And all this glory lose.

Or rather let this flesh decay—
The ruins wider grow,
Till, glad to see th' enlargèd way,
I stretch my pinions through.

XXXVI.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility,
High as the heavens above;
These are your walks, and you have show'd them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear beauteous Death! the jewel of the just,
Shining no where but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledg'd bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair well, or grove, it sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

O, Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists which blot and fill
My perspective as they pass,
Or else remove me hence unto that Hill
Where I shall need no glass.

XXXVII.

ON HEAVEN.

Think Brother! may not Heaven
  Be this common earth full grown?
Think! are not signals given?
  Of its nonage well-nigh flown?
What is Heaven? Trust not any,
  If they call it mystery;
Its features are not many,
  And have strange simplicity.

God present to us ever;
  Sweet accord of living hearts;
Fair nature; true sight never
  Waxing dim—are all its parts:
For such what need of fleeing
  From this world, so full of flowers?
'Twill be our own decreeing,
  If on earth they are not ours.

XXXVIII.

"Knowing in yourselves, that ye have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance."—Heb. x. 34.

I praised the earth, in beauty seen,
With garlands gay of various green;
I praised the sea, whose ample field
Shone glorious as a silver shield:

And earth and ocean seemed to say,
"Our beauties are but for a day."

I praised the sun whose chariot roll'd
On wheels of amber and of gold;
I praised the moon, whose softer eye
Gleamed sweetly through the summer sky:
And moon and sun in answer said,
"Our days of light are numbered."

O God, O Good beyond compare,
If thus Thy meaner works are fair,
If thus Thy bounties gild the span
Of wasting earth and sinful man,
How glorious must the mansion be
Where Thy redeemed shall dwell with Thee!

XXXIX.

"This is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life."—1 John ii. 25.

Sweet Day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;
The dew shall weep thy fall to night;—
For thou must die.

Sweet Rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in its grave—
And thou must die.

Sweet Spring! full of sweet days and roses;
A box, where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows ye have your closes;—
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But tho' the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

XL.

"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"—Ps. xxvii. 1.

Lord! it is not life to live
If Thy presence Thou deny;
Lord! if Thou Thy presence give,
'T is no longer death to die.
Source and giver of repose!
Singly from Thy smile it flows:
Thee to see and Thee to love
Perfects bliss below, above.

XLI.

"Honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years; but wisdom is the grey hair unto man, and an unspotted life is old age."—Wisd. iv. 8, 9.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be,
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sear—
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night,
It was the plant and flower of light;—
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.

XLII.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50.

Dust and clay,
Man's ancient wear!
Here you must stay,
But I elsewhere;
Souls sojourn here, but may not rest;
Who will ascend, must be undrest.

And yet some
That know to die
Before death come,
Walk to the skie
Even in this life; but all such can
Leave behinde them the old man.

XLIII.

"My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"—Ps. xlii. 2.

My Father's house on high!
Home of my soul! how near,
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye
Thy golden gates appear!

Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above.

Yet clouds will intervene
And all my prospect flies:
Like Noah's dove, I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

Anon the clouds dispart,
The winds and waters cease;
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace.

I hear at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of Heaven
Earth's Babel-tongues o'erpower.

Then, then I feel that He,—
Remembered or forgot,—
The Lord is never far from me
Though I perceive Him not.

XLIV.

"Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am."—John xvii. 24.

When trembling on the awful bourn
Which bounds life's transitory stage,
Tranquil my dying thoughts shall turn
Back on the well-spent pilgrimage:
While visions, robed in glory bright,
Beam thro' life's evening shade serene,
From Heaven's eternal isles of light;
What tho' the waters roll between?
The arm that oft hath saved, shall save;
Death has no terrors now for me.—
Where is thy sting, O where, thou grave?
O, Death! where is thy victory?
Methinks I see the flow'rets bloom
Even now on Eden's vernal shore;
Methinks I feel the breezes come
To waft the enfranchis'd prisoner o'er;

Methinks a light as soft as sweet
Smiles on me as the pale moon's ray;
Methinks I heard the angels greet,
"Come hither, spirit, come!" they say.
I hasten: as my eye grows dim,
And darkens on this fading sphere,
I see the smiling seraphim
Wax more and more resplendent there;
And as my ear grows deaf and dull
To the vain sounds of earthly art,
The music, soft and beautiful,
Of Heaven, absorbs my raptur'd heart.

XLV.

"An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—1 Peter i. 4.

There is a land, where everlasting suns
Shed everlasting brightness—where the soul
Drinks from the living streams of Love, that roll
By God's high throne;—myriads of glorious ones
Bring there th' accepted offering. O how blest
To look from this dark prison to that shrine,
To inhale one breath of paradise divine—
And enter into that eternal rest
Which waits the sons of God! Remote from care,
Remote from disappointment, to employ
Hours never-ending in the courts of joy,
And wear a crown of heavenly splendour there!

With such a destiny—what earthly fear,
What earthly woe, shall cloud my spirit? None.
Forward, then, forward to the golden throne!
Why should our restless wishes linger here?
See from the clouds a smiling angel calls,
"Come hither, Christian!—Open is the door—
The path is straight—delay not, doubt no more,
Lo! thou art welcome to the heavenly halls."
Father, I go!—I hear th' inviting sound—
No more shall earthly objects dim my eyes—
Away, away the world's dull vanities!
I hasten on—to Heaven, to Eden bound.

XLVI.

"Come up hither."—Rev. iv. 1.

I hear the voices of the sons of light,
Blending and circling round from sphere to sphere;
Each star a chord of music—a wave's flow
In the majestic sea of song that rolls
In ceaseless tides of harmony, which know
No rest—no discord. There departed souls
Join the eternal chorus. Thence they speak
To us poor pilgrims wandering still on earth—
They bid us soar above earth's vale—and seek
The country where our holier parts had birth,
And whither they are tending. Father! thither
My eager heart aspires—and when this scene
Fades round me, and its passing flow'rets wither,
There let me rest, rewarded and serene.

XLVII.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

Behold the western evening light,
It melts in deepest gloom;
So calmly Christians sink away,
Descending to the tomb.

The winds breathe low; the withering leaf
Scarce whispers from the tree;
So gently flows the parting breath,
When good men cease to be.

How beautiful on all the hills
The crimson light is shed;
'Tis like the peace the Christian gives
To mourners round his bed.

How mildly on the wandering cloud
The sunset beam is cast;
'T is like the memory left behind,
When loved ones breathe their last.

And now, above the dews of night,
The yellow star appears;
So faith springs in the hearts of those
Whose eyes are bathed with tears.

And soon the morning's happier light
Its glories shall restore;
And eyelids, that are sealed in death,
Shall wake, to close no more.

XLVIII.

"The will of the Lord be done."—Acts xxi. 14.

My Father! when around me spread,
I see the shadows of the tomb;
And life's bright visions droop and fade,
And darkness veils my future doom;

O, in that anguished hour I turn
With a still trusting heart to Thee!
And holy thoughts still shine and burn
Amid that cold, sad destiny.

They fill my soul with heavenly light,
While all around is pain and woe;
And strengthened by them in Thy sight,
Father, to drink Thy cup, I go!

Thy will be done! I will not fear
The Fate provided by Thy love;
Though clouds and darkness shade me here,
I know that all is bright above.

The stars of Heaven are shining on,
Though these frail eyes are dimmed with tears;
And though the hopes of earth be gone,
Yet are not ours the immortal years?

Father! forgive the heart that clings
  Thus trembling, to the things of time;
And bid the soul on Angel wings
  Ascend into a purer clime.

There shall no doubts disturb its trust,
  No sorrows dim celestial love;
But these afflictions of the dust,
  Like shadows of the night, remove.

XLIX.

"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying."— Rev. xxi. 4.

Ah, yes! the hour is come
When thou must hasten home,
  Pure soul! to Him who calls.
The God who gave thee breath
Walks by the side of Death,
  And naught that step appals.

Health has forsaken thee;
Hope says thou soon shalt be
  Where happier spirits dwell,
There where one loving word
Alone is never heard, —
  That loving word, farewell.

L.

"We shall not die."—Hab. i. 12.

There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found;
And while the mouldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground;

The soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image freed from clay,
In Heaven's eternal sphere shall shine,
A star of day!

The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The soul, immortal as its Sire,
Shall never die!

LI.

THE SOUL'S IMMORTALITY.

All moving things to other things do move
Of the same kind, which shows their nature such;
So earth falls down, and fire doth mount above,
Till both their proper elements do touch.

E'en so the soul, which, in this earthly mould,
The spirit of God doth secretly infuse,
Because at first she doth the earth behold,
And only this material world she views;

At first her mother earth she holdeth dear,
And doth embrace the world and worldly things;
She flies close by the ground, and hovers here,
And mounts not up with her celestial wings:

Yet under Heaven she cannot light on aught
That with her heavenly nature doth agree;
She cannot rest, she cannot fix her thought,
She cannot in this world contented be.

For who did ever yet, in honour, wealth,
Or pleasure of the sense, contentment find?
Who ever ceased to wish, when he had health,
Or, having wisdom, was not vexed in mind?

Then, as a bee which among weeds doth fall,
Which seem sweet flowers, with lustre fresh and gay,
She lights on that, and this, and tasteth all,
But, pleased with none, doth rise and soar away.

So when the soul finds here no true content,
Like Noah's dove, can no sure footing take,
She doth return from whence she first was sent,
And flies to Him that first her wings did make.

LII.

[There is something exceedingly beautiful and touching in the circumstances of Mozart's death. After giving the last touch to his celebrated "Requiem," he fell into a gentle and quiet slumber. Being awoke by the footsteps of his daughter, he called her to him and said,

"My task is done—the Requiem—*my* Requiem, is finished; take these, my last notes, and sing with them the hymn of your sainted mother. Let me once more hear those tones which have been so long my solace and delight." As she concluded the following stanzas, she dwelt for a moment on the low melancholy notes of the piece, and then, turning from the instrument, looked in silence for the approving smile of her father. It was the still, passionless smile which the wrapt and joyous spirit had left—with the seal of death upon those features.]

Spirit! thy labour is o'er!
Thy term of probation is run,
Thy steps are now bound for the untrodden shore,
And the race of immortals begun.

Spirit! look not on the strife
Or the pleasures of earth with regret,
Pause not on the threshold of limitless life,
To mourn for the day that is set.

Spirit! no fetters can bind,
No wicked have power to molest;
There the weary, like thee—the wretched, shall find
A haven, a mansion of rest.

Spirit! how bright is the road
For which thou art now on the wing!
Thy home it will be, with thy Saviour and God,
Their loud hallelujah to sing.

LIII.

"Giving thanks for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. iv. 20.

Who would not thank God for his sorrows all,
When, in their working, they become so sweet!
Good for ourselves and for humanity!
'T is thus the roots of the aloe-tree are bitter,
But cast upon the glowing coals, how sweet,
How lasting and diffusive is their fragrance!
Yea, I have seen a lame and halting child
Prop up most tenderly a broken plant;
And a poor mother, whose own child was burnt,
Snatch from the flame the children of another.
So, generous man, return thou constant thanks
For all thy griefs to God and to mankind,
And ending grief will make unending joy!
Or, if it end not, it will be pure blessing
While, in the trying furnace, thou dost good;
And if from woe released, and happy, spread
Thy happiness all round thee. So doth God;
Suffering or happy, man, be always thankful.

FINIS.

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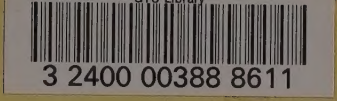

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